



**The  
World  
Ship  
Society**



**Southend Branch**

## *News and Views*

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### **NOTES**

Thanks go to Graham, Geoff, Krispen Eddie ,Tony, Stuart and Andrew for their contributions

Well we have been going now for three years. Thanks you to the readers thank you to the contributors and photographers

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## News

### **OMA Baatbyggeri delivers first of two hybrid ferries to Norled**



Shipbuilder OMA Baatbyggeri has delivered the first of two hybrid battery-electric ferries it is building for operator Norled.

Construction was completed with the successful commissioning of diesel-electric systems, integrated by SEAM. The systems integrator re-designed its e-SEA Drive power system platform for the project in order to reduce its weight and the space required for its installation, as well as improving energy efficiency.

SEAM plans to integrate the new e-SEA Drive platform on future deliveries withing the express boat segment. It will also deliver and install batteries onboard both Norled vessels in summer 2023.

### **Celestyal acquires former Holland America Line cruise ship**



Greece-based operator Celestyal has expanded its fleet to three vessels after acquiring former Holland America Line ship Ryndam.

The 1,260-guest ship, which most recently sailed for P&O Australia, will undergo a €20 million (\$21.2 million) renovation and technical overhaul before starting service as Celestyal Journey. The work will be carried out in Piraeus, Greece.

### **Maersk Tankers vessel barred from Spanish port over 'Russia sanctions breach'**

A Maersk Tankers vessel has been stopped from unloading its cargo of oil in Spain for breaching the European Union's Russian sanctions rules, according to the country's transport ministry.

The 50,000-dwt Maersk Magellan (built 2010) was turned away from Tarragona after receiving a cargo in a ship-to-ship transfer that had previously been carried by a former Russian-flagged carrier.

The Maersk Magellan left the area of the port late on Monday and headed back into the Mediterranean with its 355,000 barrel cargo, Spanish authorities said the tanker was carrying diesel but Maersk said the cargo was vacuum gas oil (VGO).

The data showed that the Maersk Magellan received the cargo in a ship-to-ship transfer from a product tanker in the Alboran Sea

The 108,900-dwt Elephant (built 2007) had originally received the cargo from the Seychelles-owned 46,200-dwt Nobel (built 1997) which changed from the Russian flag on 1 July to Cameroon.

The transport ministry said the Maersk Magellan was barred under rules that “prohibit conscious and deliberate participation in activities whose purpose or effect is to circumvent the prohibitions established by the European Union after the invasion of Ukraine by Russia”.

The inquiry revealed the certificate of origin of the oil from the Nobel.

In a statement, Maersk Tankers said the tanker had received the cargo as part of its “normal operations” and following a full sanction check.

The port ban is the second time that Spain has banned a tanker from docking linked to Russian-origin cargoes but with a less high-profile operator.

The 9,400-dwt Black Star (built 2001) was not allowed to berth in Barcelona after the authorities received evidence that it was carrying cargo transferred from a Russian ship, the Andrey Pervozvanniy.

## **MSC Cruises christens second LNG powered ship**



MSC Cruises plans to host the naming ceremony for its newest vessel MSC Euribia in Copenhagen, Denmark, on 8 June 2023.



The ship is named after Eurybia, the Greek goddess of mastery of the seas. Denmark was chosen as the location for the ship's launch due to the fact the country's commitment to sustainability and protecting the oceans aligns with MSC Cruises' own environmental goals.

MSC Euribia will be the cruise line's second LNG-powered ship and will feature environmental technologies including systems for improving onboard wastewater treatment, waste management and energy efficiency. It will also have shore power connectivity.

The 181,541gt vessel will also feature a fresco painted on its exterior, which has been designed by German graphic artist Alex Flaemig to reinforce MSC Cruises' commitment to sustainability.

MSC Euribia will begin its inaugural season in Northern Europe on 10 June 2023 with seven-night sailings from Copenhagen and Kiel in Germany to the Norwegian fjords. Ports of call will include Geiranger, Ålesund, Flam and others.

**AE Systems wins LR's certification for autonomous RIB vessels** BAE Systems Autonomous Pacific 24 (AP24) rigid inflatable boat (RIB) has been awarded Lloyd's Register Unmanned Marine Systems Certification.

As informed, it is the first uncrewed military vessel to achieve this certification, which verifies stringent safety and operational performance standards.



Credit: BAE Systems

The AP24 RIB was developed by BAE Systems for the Royal Navy under funding from the NavyX autonomy and lethality accelerator programme, which aims to deliver new technology at pace. It is a step-change for the Royal Navy in uncrewed operations, adding capability and flexibility to naval military missions.

The uncrewed AP24 RIB has potential to undertake missions such as force protection and anti-piracy, persistent intelligence gathering and maritime security to meet the evolving threats of modern warfare and keep sailors safe.

It is designed to be part of a modern, multi-domain force and can share sensor data easily and securely with allies and enhance the Royal Navy's operational effectiveness at sea whilst reducing threats to its sailors.

## **RAN takes delivery of 4 vessels**

The Royal Australian Navy has taken delivery of the fourth evolved Cape-class patrol vessel from shipbuilder Austal.

The vessel, ADV Cape Capricorn, was officially accepted by the Commonwealth of Australia. Austal has now delivered four Evolved Capes to the Royal Australian Navy since the contract was signed in May 2020.



Credit: Austal

The 58-metre aluminium monohull patrol boat is the fourth of eight to be delivered to the Royal Australian Navy. The first three Evolved Cape-class Patrol Boats, ADV Cape Otway, ADV Cape Peron and ADV Cape Naturaliste were delivered in March, August and November 2022, respectively.

The Evolved Capes feature new, larger amenities to accommodate up to 32 people, improved quality of life systems and advanced sustainment intelligence systems that further enhance the Royal Australian Navy's ability to fight and win at sea.

The patrol boats will be used for a wide variety of constabulary and naval missions and play a critical role in Australia's national security, as a high-performing, reliable and effective maritime asset.

## **Austal USA Delivers First 'Autonomous Capable' EPF Ship To US Navy**



Austal USA delivered Expeditionary Fast Transport USNS Apalachicola (EPF 13) to the U.S. Navy, today. This is the 2nd Navy ship named after the coastal Florida city; both ships were built in Mobile.

EPF 13 is now the largest surface ship in the U.S. Navy fleet with autonomous capability. EPF 13 went to sea five times over a several-month duration allowing Austal USA and their industry partners, L3Harris and General Dynamics Mission Systems, to test and analyze not only her typical ship systems but those resulting from autonomous design and construction contract modifications required by the Navy to establish EPF 13 as an autonomous prototype.

With a shallow draft and high-speed, the EPF's agility provides a positional advantage in the littorals and makes it an ideal candidate to prototype large vessel autonomous operations, including logistics, tendering and adjunct magazine mission profiles.

Fundamental to the autonomy effort was Austal USA's highly automated in-house designed machinery control system (MCS), which allows the ship to be minimally manned by centralizing machinery operations to the bridge. All Spearhead-class EPFs built to date incorporate the Austal USA MCS design which is secure, scalable, distributive and reconfigurable for multiple propulsion configurations.

Combined with the already highly automated hull, mechanical & electrical systems installed on EPF class ships, Austal USA added automated maintenance, health monitoring, and mission readiness to provide EPF 13 with the capability to conduct up to 30 days of operation without human intervention.

## **CMA CGM follows ONE with bow windshield installation**



The bow windshields first invented by Japan's Mitsui OSK Lines (MOL) could be set to go mainstream with news that the world's third largest liner has installed one on a flagship in its fleet.

Images show the 16,000 teu CMA CGM Marco Polo has had a nose job, with a curved navy blue metal shield added to the prow of the giant vessel.

MOL was the first to develop these windshields for containerships, getting Class NK to check how much they reduce bunker consumption in early tests six years ago. MOL's merged container line, Ocean Network Express (ONE), operated with Nippon Yusen Kaisha (NYK) and Kawasaki Kisen Kaisha (K Line),

has in the last year installed windshields on two ships, the ONE Trust and ONE Tradition. MOL is also commercialising the development of hard sails, with the first one installed on a bulk carrier last year.

Alphaliner, which has been covering container shipping's efforts to decarbonise carefully, noted in its most recent weekly report: "It remains to be seen whether the retrofit is a one-off test or whether CMA CGM intends to install windshields on additional vessels."

## **UK invests £77 million to decarbonise maritime travel**



The UK Government is investing £77 million in clean maritime technology and has launched a Zero Emission Vessels and Infrastructure competition for UK ship operators and ports to apply for funding.

This is the UK's first funded sustainable maritime initiative and the money will be used for sustainability projects such as battery-powered vessels, wind-assisted ferries, low-carbon fuels like hydrogen and ammonia, and building shore power supply capabilities. Successful applicants must be able to demonstrate a plan to launch zero-emission vessels or initiatives by 2025 at the latest.

The investment demonstrates the government's commitment to reduce the rate of global warming by 1.5C, which was a target set within the Paris agreement, by encouraging sustainable maritime travel.

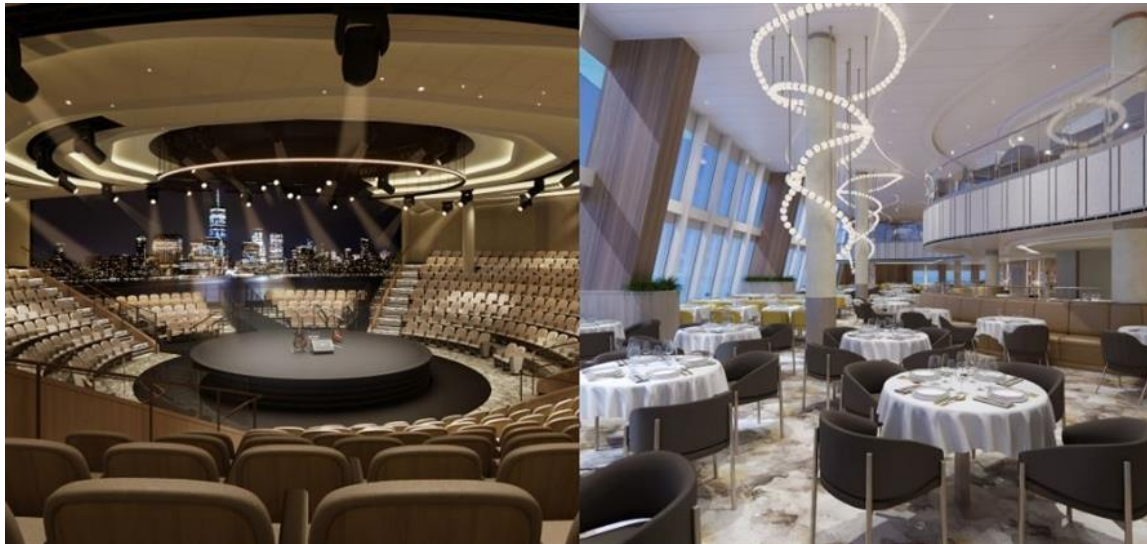
The competition will be overseen by Innovate UK.

The government will also provide up to £7.4 million to fund the new Clean Maritime Research Hub, which will involve teams from several UK universities. The research will provide expertise for the maritime sector. The hub will be co-



funded by the Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council as part of the UK SHORE programme, which launched in March 2022 with £206 million in funding.

### **New Princess Cruises ship to feature ‘sun-inspired’ onboard spaces**



Princess Cruises will debut its newest and largest ship, Sun Princess, in early 2024. The 4,300-guest ship, which will be the first of the brand’s fleet to be powered by LNG, is currently under construction at Fincantieri’s shipyard in Italy.

Sun Princess has been designed to reflect the ship’s Italian heritage with large public spaces for guests to relax, such as in its Piazza and The Dome.

The vessel design has also been inspired by rays of sunlight, which will be characterised in the Horizons Dining Room. The three-storey dining venue will have a two-deck-long sculpture at its centre as well as sea views. Each deck will be decorated differently to reflect the variety of dining experiences that will be on offer in this space.

Other dining venues with new designs will include Alfredo’s Pizzeria that will allow guests to watch as chefs create and cook their pizzas in a 968-degree round oven; Crown Grill, a contemporary twist on a classic steakhouse with leather booths, circular seating and modern artwork; and Sabatini’s Italian Trattoria, which will feature a pasta room where guests can watch the pasta-making process, as well as bistro-style nooks.

Princess Cruises will also redesign several of its signature venues for Sun Princess, including Crooner's, Wheelhouse Bar, International Café, Good Spirits and Gelateria.

Most entertainment will be hosted in the Princess Arena, which will feature 1,000 seats, curved walls and a central stage to optimise viewing angles for the whole audience. In addition, the ship will have a Princess Live! entertainment lounge where guests can take part in game shows and trivia. The lounge will feature a large LED screen on a stage as well as comfortable seating. Plus, the ship will also have the largest casino in the fleet, with more than 200 slot machines and video-poker games.

Sun Princess will also offer five boutique-style retail spaces and an art gallery, which will offer Princess Cruises-branded merchandise, destination-specific products and more.

## **Viking will debut its fifth Seine River vessel in 2025**



The new ship will sail the brand's eight-day 'Paris and the Heart of Normandy' roundtrip, which will take guests from Paris to Giverny, Rouen and Normandy.

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The new vessel will accommodate 168 guests in 84 staterooms and an Aquavit Terrace. It will have a hybrid propulsion system with batteries and onboard solar panels, as well as shore power capacity.

## **Fincantieri floats out new Regent Seven Seas Cruises ship**



Fincantieri has floated out the newest Regent Seven Seas Cruises ship, Seven Seas Grandeur, in a ceremony at its shipyard in Ancona, Italy.

Orsinja Myshku, senior controller of Ancona shipyard's economic administration and control office served as godmother for the ceremony, cutting a ribbon following a prayer by the shipyard chaplain. The ship's dry dock was then flooded, completing the ceremony.

Fincantieri will now complete final construction work onboard Seven Seas Grandeur, outfitting her suites, lounges and restaurants.

## Visitors



**Ribero Duero Knusten**





**Hafnia Guangzhou** Built 2019 43693GRT Panama

Current Location Scheveningen Anchorage



**Federal Passion** Built 2022 25831 GRT Panama

En route to Rostock



**A351**



**Ben Wollacott**

Current Location Chatham





**Dame Vera Lynne**

Current Location Chatham



**Valrosssa** Built 2008 29987 GRT Malta

Current Location En route to Gibraltar



**Chrysanthe** Built 2011 20218 GRT Marshall Islands

Current Location En route to Skagen



**Cap San Sounio** Built 2014 119441 GRT Panama Owner Moller

Current Location En route to Tanger





**Colorado Express** Returning photographer Ander Gallaway



**African Toucan** Built 2017 232477 GRT Bahamas

Current Position Aviles Spain



**Torm Lene** Built 2008 29283 GRT Denmark

Current Location En route Amsterdam



**Halki** Built 2011 22683 GRT Marshall Islands

Current Position Malaga



**Hafnia Torres** Built 2016 24120 GRT Singapore

Current Position En route to Hamburg



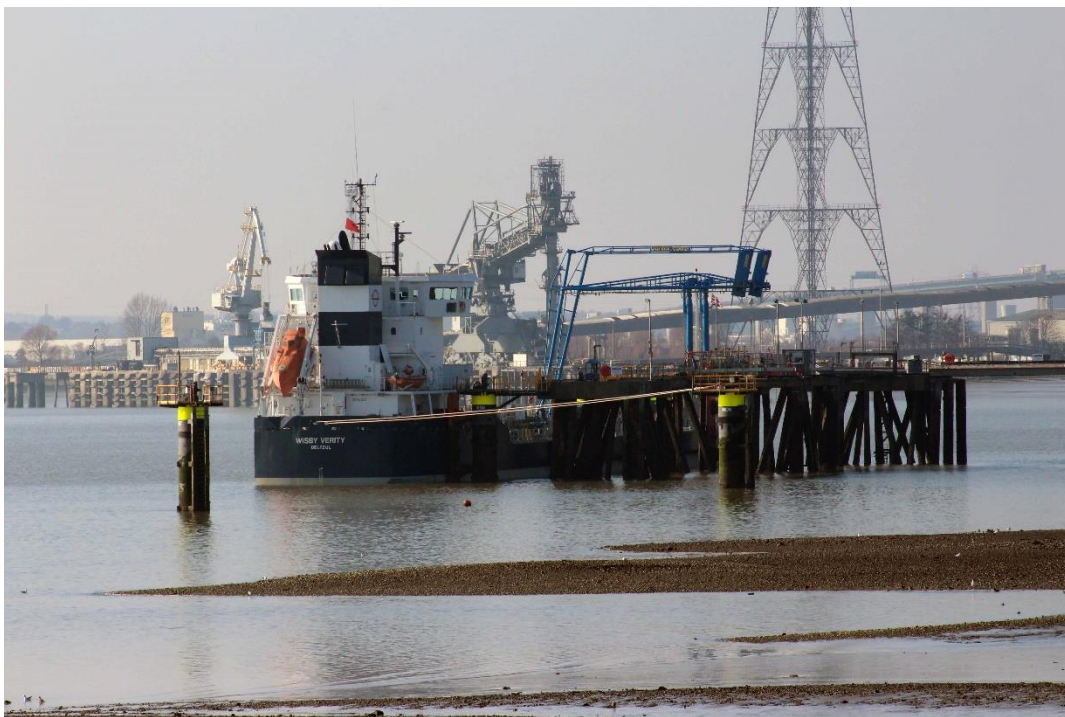
**WEC Jan Steen** Built 2007 9962 GRT Portugal

Current Position En route to Bilbao





**Bulldog**    Owner CPBS Marine Services



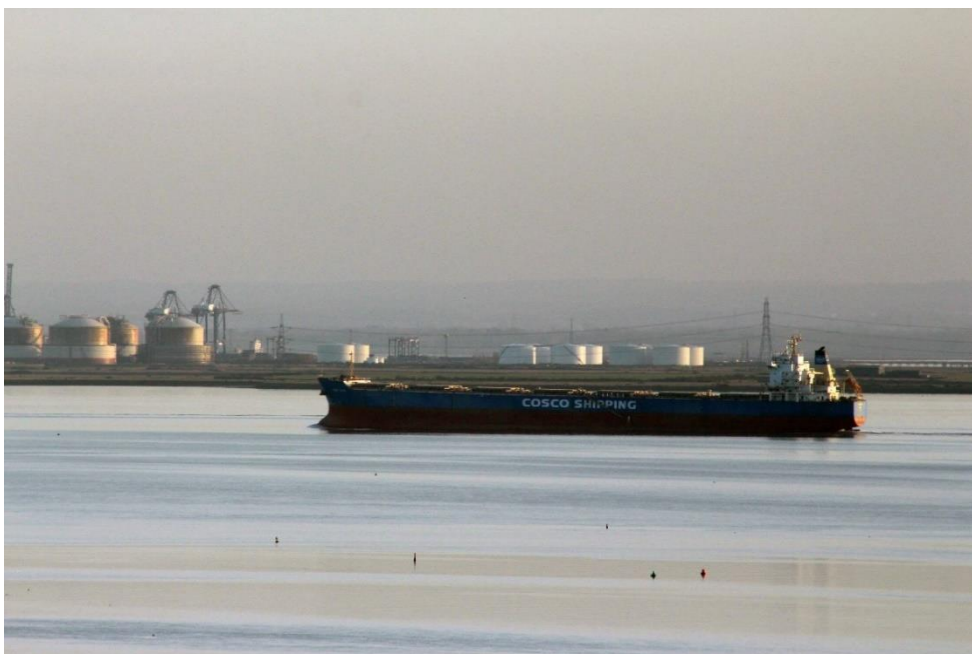
**Wisbey Verity**    Built    2004 4259 GRT    Netherlands

Current Location Off Dublin



**Celtic Voyager** Built 1997 2805 GRT UK

Current Position En route to Antwerp



**Hong Yuan** Built 2009 40896 GRT Panama

Current position En route to Takodari





**Fraserborg** Built 201 8911 GRT Netherlands

Current Position En route to Antwerp



**Hafnia Andesine** Built 2019 23676 GRT Marshall Islands

Current position En route Dunkirk USA



**Auto advance** Built 2012 35667 GRT Portugal

Current Location En route to Vigo



**CMA CGM Carl Antonio** Built 2017 96223 GRT Malta

Current Position En route Callao Peru





**NYK Vesta** Built 2007 97825 GRT Panama Owner

Current Position En route to India

## KRISPENS PICTURES



**Scelveringhe**





**Rikke**



**Federal Passion**



**Aasfoss**



**Largo Eagle and Katelina**

## **NATO WARSHIPS VISIT THE THAMES**

Pictures by Krispen Atkinson



**M860**



**M860 HNLMS Schiedam** Netherlands Commissioned 1986





**M351 Otra** Norwegian Built 1996 Alta Class. Minesweeper Length 55m Built by Kvaerner



**M1061 Gromitz** Germany Frakenthal class minesweeper Built 1994 Speed 18 knts  
Length 54m Built Kroger werft





**A531**



**A531 Nordkapp** Norwegian Nordkapp Class Length 105m Speed 22 knts



**Devon Samson ex London Samson**

## **SOLENT VISITORS**



**One Truth ex MOL Truth outbound to Le Havre Built 2017 189766 GRT**



**Brussels Express** Outbound to Algeciras



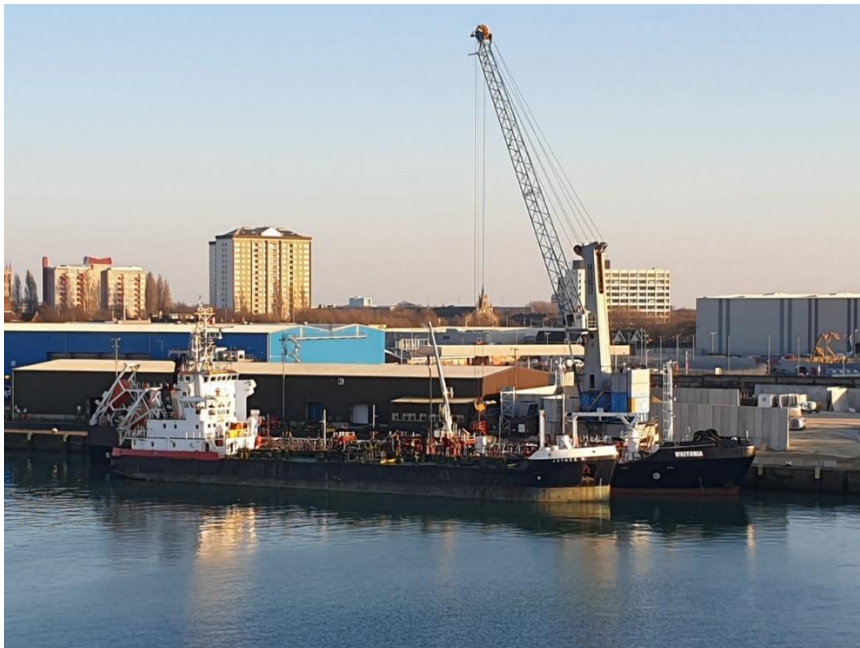


# A SHORT CRUISE ON SPIRIT OF ADVENTURE

## PORTSMOUTH



**Whitonia** refuelling Jayne W , SD Netley, SD Norton and CS 8804



**Whitonia**

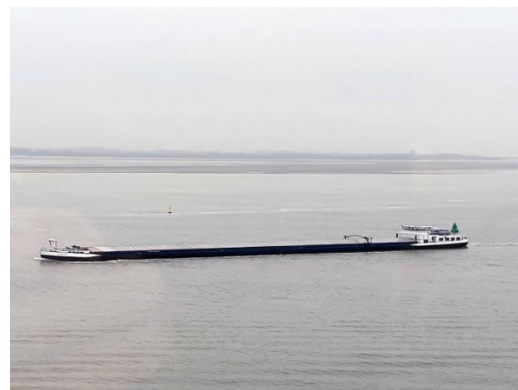




**RFA A 389 Wave Knight**

**ANTWERP**

Evantia (130m long) Lolette and Denver (89m long ) Other vessel on piles .  
Pusher tug Inca







**MSC Amy with scrubber working**



**COSCO Taurus**



**Scheldt River**



**Sea shell**

**ALONG SIDE ROTTERDAM**





**Bunkering**



## **ZEEBRUGGE**

Vladimir Voronin LMG and Coral Nordic LNG awaiting orders . Yasmine bound for Purfleet and Sixtine bound Hull. Alaska and Inventory barges . CSCL Mars container ship behind containers . Car import yards





**Coral Nordic**





**Vladimir Voronin**





**CSCSL Mars**

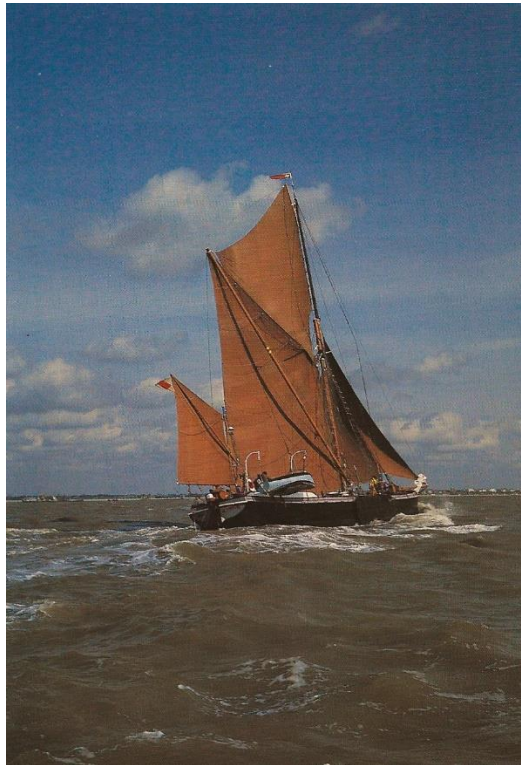
## **WSS Quiz Questions Edition 65**

Ships in the news recently. These are the answers, but what were the questions?

1. ONDA
2. ARMADA SEGARA
3. DMITRY DONSKOY
4. MSC IRENA
5. EVER GIVEN
6. WAN HAI 288 & RESURGENCE
7. PHOBUS & DEIMOS
8. DAME VERA LYNN & BEN WOOLLACOT
9. CGM CMA MARCO POLO
10. CAMPO SQUARE
11. OOCL SPAIN
12. SEAMAK
13. LAGERTHA

- 14. MSC AURELIA
- 15. USS ALBACORE

## **FRANCIS & GILDERS, LTD**



**Dawn**





## **Mirosa**

In 1915 Henry Howe, owner of six sailing barges died leaving his 'seeking' business to his widow. She found it difficult to operate and sent for her nephew, Josh Francis, an experienced barge and tug skipper to manage the fleet. He soon took on a partner Cecil Gilders, a shipbroker who lived at Leigh-on-Sea and owned the barge ALASKA outright, together with shares in several others. Josh Francis ,too, held shares in several barges.

In 1933 the partnership became a limited company trading as Francis & Gilders Ltd. The two men then commenced to bring all the 'seeking' barges on the rivers Colne and Blackwater together under their ownership. Several others besides local craft were bought in; - GEORGE SMEED came from Smeed-Dean the Sittingbourne brick maker and a much later addition was COLONIA from Cranfield, the Ipswich miller.

All of these flew Francis and Gilders distinctive, diagonally divided purple and gold 'bob' or masthead flag.

The firm also managed barges for smaller owners such as MAYLAND for Prior the Burnham boatbuilder and VERONA, VERA VIA and GLADYS for Shruballs of London better known as a surveyor. There were also CASTANET and BANKSIDE, both owned by Colonel Bingham and converted to auxiliary power in the nineteen thirties. Neither of these two was to survive the war.

So, at one time, the fleet comprised about thirty barges. Their trade was mainly in grain and building materials to local organisations on the rivers Colne and Blackwater, although some of the bigger barges ventured further afield and were seen in ports as far apart as Ipswich, Yarmouth and Sandwich in Kent. One unusual cargo was loaded by MAYLAND – cockleshells from Leigh -on - Sea

One very common destination was Marriages East Mill which lay upper a very narrow and shallow tributary of the river Colne. To reach this the barges had to pass under several low bridges. Not only did masts and gear have to be taken down but laid very flat to go under these bridges. Once this was done, if no tug was available, the barges had to be poled up or even manhandled up to the mill. Once at the destination mast and sailing gear had to be raised to enable discharging and ,once that was complete lowered again ready for the return journey and then raised again to put to sea for the next cargo.

Inevitably such a large fleet contained some characters among its

employees. There was Holy Joe, a very religious man, who was only heard to swear once, when LADY HELEN sailed to London and back, picking up a freight originally destined for his LESLIE WEST, while he remained windbound on the Colne. Then there was the skipper nicknamed Nelson because he had only one effective eye. Billy Austin of the READY was nonplussed when asked to choose a new name for his barge when the original was required for a new Trinity House yacht. He consulted his colleagues and someone suggested that he named her after his wife – Rosa. And so she became MIROSA.

Francis & Gilders suffered badly during the war, losing several fine barges. Their CENTUAR was due to go to Dunkirk to help with the evacuation but she was damaged in Dover harbour and did not go after all. EMMA was badly damaged by a bomb in the London Docks and only fit to be a lighter afterwards. The big steel lighter lying near her was just about vaporised. ALARIC was machinegunned with the loss of skipper Harry Eves. GERTRUDE MAY was mined in 1942 and her mate lost. Both of Colonel Bingham's former craft which had been purchased by Francis & Gilders in 1940, were lost, BANKSIDE by mine and CASTANET by ripping her bottom out on a wreck in the river Orwell. Others were returned in a poor condition after mine watching and other wartime duties, unfit for further sailing.

After the war the firm, like many others, began installing auxiliary engines in their vessels. The first were the two big barges VARUNA and ALARIC which were given 66h.p. Kelvin diesels in 1947. LESLIE WEST and BRITISH EMPIRE followed in 1951, LADY HELEN in 1952, CLARA in 1953 and DAWN in 1959. All had their mizzens replaced by a wheelhouse but otherwise kept most of their sailing gear. They were never reduced to pure motor barges until their ownership changed.

It was felt by many barge skippers that engines were helpful in close conditions, such as the London Docks or in a flat calm but sailing was far better in the open sea with a good breeze. And so the auxiliary barges continued to sail wherever possible.

Josh Francis retired in 1951 and his firm was bought by the London & Rochester Trading Co (LRTC) and continued to trade as a wholly owned subsidiary. It ran a separate account with the PLA and if we, in the Tonnage Dues Office at West India Dock, wished to speak to Francis & Gilders London office we had to ask LRTC's switchboard to put us through.

In 1956 the remaining sailing barges – MIROSA, KITTY, CENTUAR and GEORGE SMEED were sold to Brown , timber merchant of Heybridge Basin, for use as unrigged timber lighters and several of the auxiliaries followed later having been reduced to pure motor barges. Ships destined for Heybridge with timber were generally too big to fit in the basin so redundant sailing barges were used to lighten the timber ashore while the ship was at anchor in deeper water.

Between 1954 and 1961, under the parent company's modernisation plans, four new steel motor barges were added to Francis & Gilders dwindling fleet - JOSH FRANCIS, CECIL GILDERS, ANDESCOL and BENCOL. These were originally coloured green but eventually changed to the parent company's salmon livery. During the same period the remaining auxiliary barges were reduced to pure motor barges. The company Francis and Gilders, Ltd was finally wound up in 1976

But that was not the end. Brown's had really looked after their timber lighters and when lighterage to Heybridge ceased in the 1960's after the enlargement of the basin, several of them were suitable for rerigging as yachts or charter barges. These included MIROSA, GEORGE SMEED, CENTUAR and KITTY with the former auxiliary BRITISH EMPIRE also briefly back sailing but now derelict at Battlesbridge. All four ex-sailors have competed in recent barge matches, with MIROSA being particularly successful. And so they sail on.

#### FLEET LIST – FRANCIS & GILDERS, LTD

NAME	NETT TONS	BUILT	YEAR	FATE	
Agnes & Constance	63	Frindsbury	1889	Lighter	1946
Alaska	55	“	“ 1886	Hulk	1945
Alaric	73	Sandwich	1901	Derelict, Strood	
Bankside	60	Milton	1900	Mined,	1942
Beaumont Belle	54	Maldon	1894	Lighter,	1947
British Empire	50	Brightlingsea	1899	Derelict, Battlesbridge	
Castanet	50	Ipswich	1897	Hulk,	1942





Centaur	60	Harwich	1895	Still Sailing
Clara	60	Sittingbourne	1896	Scout HQ
Colonia	62	Sandwich	1897 L	Lost, 1956



Dawn	54	Maldon	1897	Still Sailing
Delce	48	Rochester	1914	Broken up, 1956
Emma	64	Maldon	1897	Lighter, 1941
Ethel Ada	48	Ipswich	1897	Yacht

Falconet	49	Strood	1899	“	
Federation	54	Brightlingse	1900		
General Jackson	49	Ipswich	1896		

Sold 1921  
Yacht 1949



George Smeed	64	Murston	1882	Still Sailing Lighter
Keeble	45	Sittingbourne	1876	



Kitty	65	Harwich	1895	Still Sailing Lighter
Lady Helen	56	Rochester	1902	
Leslie West	56	Gravesend	1900	



“

Pic S Emery

Mirosa ex Ready	69	Maldon	1892	Still Sailing
Oak	50	Maldon	1881	Lighter
Peace	49	Brightlingsea	1885	Yacht,1925
Saltcote Belle	48	Maldon	1895	“ 1951
Sea Spray	50	Rochester	1883	Target,1942
Surprise	44	Colchester	1879	Derelict,1935
Varuna	59	Greenwich	1907	Yacht,1970

#### POWERED CRAFT

Andescol	121	Hoogesand	1961	Sold
<b>Bencol</b>	<b>127</b>	<b>Cowes</b>	<b>1964</b>	<b>“</b>
<b>Cecil Gilders</b>	<b>89</b>	<b>Wivenhoe</b>	<b>1954</b>	<b>“</b>
<b>Josh Francis</b>	<b>89</b>	<b>“</b>	<b>“</b>	<b>“</b>

#### MANAGED CRAFT

<b>Mayland</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>Maldon</b>	<b>1888</b>	<b>Tea room</b>
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Gladys	64	Sandwich	1900	Sold
Veravia	72	Sittingbourne	1898	Lost
Verona	56	Greenwich	1905	Yacht

**Please note: All craft apart from those described as 'Still Sailing' or 'Laid up' have now been broken up and little of them remains. Fate refers to their disposal by Francis & Gilders or LRTC .**

**G.E.D.**

## **YACHTS OF THE WORLD**

### **HDMY DANNEBORG (A540)**



Her Danish Majesty's Yacht Dannebrog (A540) (Danish: KDM Dannebrog) was launched by Queen Alexandrine at Copenhagen in 1931, and commissioned on

26 May 1932. The yacht serves as the official and private residence for Queen Margrethe II of Denmark, and members of the Royal Family when they are on official visits overseas and on summer cruises in Danish waters. When at sea, the Royal Yacht also participates in surveillance and sea-rescue services.

The Dannebrog, named after the flag of Denmark, was built in 1931–1932 at the Naval Dockyard in Copenhagen. She replaced the previous royal vessel, an 1879 paddle steamer, also called Dannebrog. The yacht has dual functions: she serves as the Royal Yacht in peacetime and can become a hospital ship in emergency alerts or war.

The ship's hull is of rivetted steel construction on transverse frames. The ship has a clipper bow and a 'counter stern. Viewed from the side, the ship may be divided into two sections. Forward of the funnel there is space for the crew, any cargo, and the engine. At the rear is the Royal Apartment, which could accommodate patients if ever the yacht were needed as a hospital ship. On visits to Danish and foreign ports the covered quarterdeck is used for receptions.

The Royal accommodation comprises studies for the Queen and The Prince Consort, a Dining Saloon, Lounge, Bedrooms, etc. They have taken a personal interest in fitting out the vessel and the choice of furnishings. The Royal Apartment contains furniture and fittings from the previous 1879 Royal vessel.

The Royal Yacht Dannebrog is an independent command, administered by the Chief of the Queen's Naval Household, who is a member of the Royal Household. The crew of the Dannebrog comprises 9 officers, 7 sergeants, 2 enlisted able-seamen and 34 conscripts. The officers are normally seconded for periods of two to four years, whereas the conscripts stay for just one summer.

## **THE AMBRIABELLA**



The above image on the Boat International website caught my eye recently. What a beautifully proportioned ship. “They don’t make ‘em like that any more”. The feature was about a small former passenger vessel named AMBRIABELLA. She is presently lying in the Quaiat Shipyard in Trieste, Italy, waiting for someone to fund the extensive restoration and conversion into a private superyacht or for the charter market.





LAUNCH DAY WITH DIONEIA

The ship was launched alongside her sister ship, the DIONEIA, in January 1962 at the Cantiere Navale Folszegi Shipyard in Muggia, Italy. She is of 292 gross tonnes with dimensions 52m x 7.4m x 2.2m. Her hull is of steel and her superstructure aluminium. She was built for the Societa Navigazione Alto-Adriatico of Trieste, and started life as a Vaporetti water bus connecting Trieste, Grado and Venice.



IN HER PRIME

As built, she was powered by twin Fiat SGM engines of 1280 bhp each, giving a cruising speed of 14.7 knots. Her capacity was 390 passengers. In 1976 she was



sold to a Greek Cypriot owner and was renamed IOS and later to IOS EXPRESS, cruising the Greek islands under the Greek flag. In 1996 she sailed on behalf of Santorini Express Shipping under the name of IONIAN EXPRESS BELLA. By then she was powered by twin 559 kW Caterpillar C32A engines. In the late 1990s she “disappeared from the radar”.

In 2009, after a 9 year search, she was found by a group of Italian entrepreneurs, she was traced to a small shipyard some 40 kilometres from Piraeus, where she was about to be scrapped. On 23<sup>rd</sup> September 2009 she was towed back to Trieste for potential restoration. The conversion of her sister DIONEIA was completed in 2013, and she is successfully operating in the Mediterranean charter market.



DIONEIA AS

## SUPERYACHT

The AMBRIABELLA is at present lying in the Quaiat yard awaiting a “White Knight”, owned by Nebula Yachting Investment Ltd. Superyacht specialists, Wissman & Associates LLC, have drawn up plans for her conversion to a luxury yacht, with accommodation for 12 guests in 6 suites plus 9 crew.

## WHARVES ALONG THE RIVER

### ERITH REACH



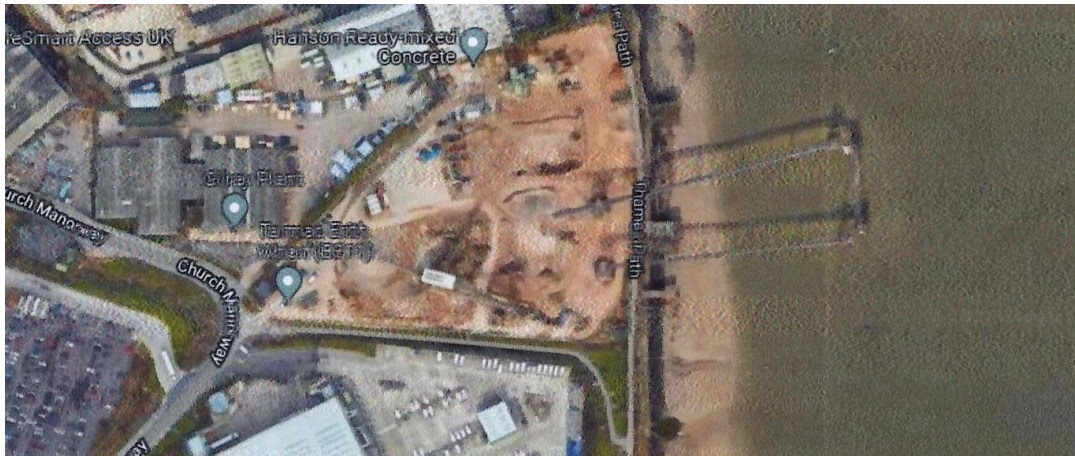
MULBERRY

## WHARF

1. MULBERRY WHARF: This site is still operated by Tarmac, but the jetty is derelict. It was "T" shaped with some dolphins downstream. It is mainly of reinforced concrete construction and dates from 1920. It is on the site of the former Powder Magazine jetty, and it is a safeguarded wharf.



MULBERRY WHARF



PIONEER WHARF

2. PIONEER WHARF: Also operated by Tarmac, Pioneer Wharf jetty is still active. A single berth 160m long gives 13.58m at MHWS and 6.8m at CD. The facility is mostly dedicated to Tarmac Group's own dredgers. There are 2 separate receiving conveyers of 1800 tonnes per hour to receive self-discharging vessels.



WHARF

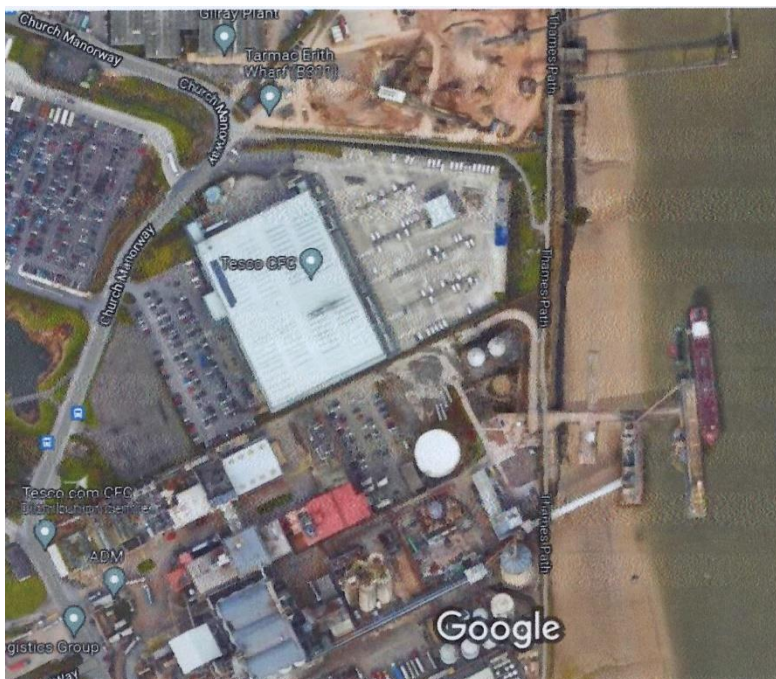
PIONEER





CITY OF LONDON

FREQUENT VISITOR: CITY OF LONDON Trailing Suction Hopper Dredger owned and managed by Lafarge Tarmac Shipping. Built in Appledore in 1989 and 5989 sdwt. UK flag.



### ERITH OIL WORKS

3. ERITH OIL WORKS: Originally opened in 1908 as British Oil & Cake Mills, for most of its life it was part of Unilever. The factory was built between



1913 and 1917, with 24 silos still extant showing early use of reinforced concrete. The site was heavily bombed during WW2. It was one of the earliest crushers of oilseeds to produce vegetable oil for human consumption.



THE ERITH OIL WORKS IN 1934



ORANESS ON

## OUTER JETTY

It was and still is the largest vegetable oil plant in the UK. It became part of the American based multi-national Archer Daniels Midland group in 1990. There are two berths, the outside serving for rapeseed discharge and vegetable oil discharge, whilst the inner berth serves for rapeseed meal outloading.



POLLA ROSE

DELIVERING RAPE SEED FROM TILBURY GRAIN TERMINAL

The outside berth can handle ships up to 121m long, and it provides 13.58m at MHWS and 6.8m at CD. The inner berth can handle ships up to 85m long, and it gives 9.18m at MHWS and 2.4m at CD.



PURGO LOADING EDIBLE

VEGETABLE OIL

REGULARS: PURGO tank barge for edible oils. Built in 1962 as a dry bulker EXODUS, and converted at Lowestoft in 2004. 580 sdwt. Owned and operated by HCH Marine Ltd. Regular run between Erith and Jurgens Jetty at Purfleet. UK flag.

POLLA ROSE: Dry bulker built in 1971 in Belgium as the DOLFIN. 564 sdwt, Owned and managed by Thames Shipping. Regular run between Erith and Tilbury Grain Terminal. UK flag.



EEMSHORN

RECENT VISITOR: EEMSHORN Dry bulker of 6000 sdwt. Built in Germany in 2008. Owned and managed by Wagnebourg. Dutch flagged.



CATHMA

CATHMA: General cargo vessel of 6665 sdwt. Built in 2007. Owned and operated by Royal Wagenborg. Dutch flagged.





## WILSON LEER

WILSON LEER: General cargo vessel of 3695 sdwt. Built in 1996 as the NORTHERN LAUNES. Barbados flagged.

PAST VISITOR: ORANESS Chemical tanker built in 1985 as FLAGSHIP 1. 2586 sdwt and Danish flagged.



## CONWAY'S

## WHARF

4. CONWAYS JETTY: The site is operated by F.M. Conway, handling aggregates and asphalt. The jetty was built in 2011 alongside the old plasterboard jetty, and was associated with a new asphalt plant, said to



be the busiest in the UK. There is one berth 110m long which gives 10m at MHWS. There is a 360 degree hydraulic dock crane with a 500 tonnes per hour ship to shore conveyor system leading to 8 covered holding bays.



CONWAY'S

WHARF

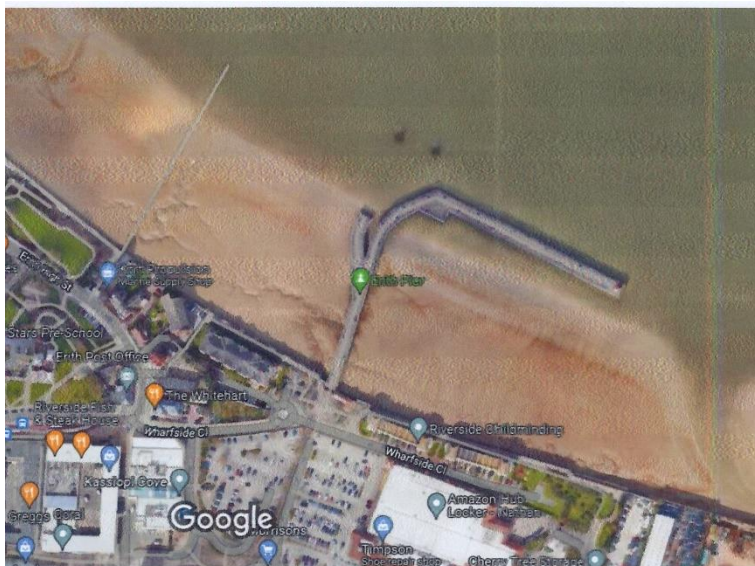


CONWAY'S WHARF



HEKLA

RECENT VISITOR: HEKLA Bulker of 3592 sdwt. Built in 2008 in the Czech Republic as the HEKLA B. Operated by Wagenborg Shipping. Dutch flag.



ERITH PIER

## 5. ERITH PIER

The jetty now known as Erith Pier originated as a pleasure pier in 1842. It later became a significant commercial facility, sometimes known as Cory's Wharf after the company used it for coal distribution for many years.



ERITH PIER

The present reinforced concrete structure dates from 1957 as a deepwater facility after the earlier wooden piers had outlived their usefulness. The 1957 jetty had a rail siding running its full length. For a few years in the 70s, the jetty had a RoRo pontoon, the ramp and approach ramp are still visible on its upstream side. Since the late 1990s, it is now a public facility, used by walkers and anglers, and is reportedly the longest pier in London.



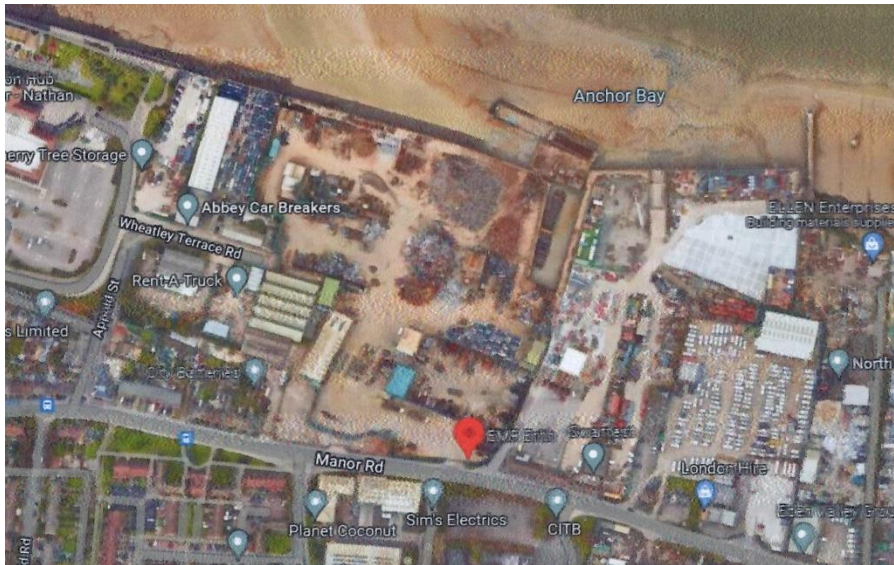
ERITH PIER IN 2013

DURING THE CROSSRAIL TUNNELING WORK

PAST VISITOR: SHETLAND TRADER Dry bulker of 2386 sdwt. Built in 1992 as the MARS. Owned and managed by Faversham Ships Ltd. Barbados flagged.

6. EMR





EMR

The present site occupied by European Metal Recycling was originally the Erith Iron Works. In around 1903, the site was taken over by Herbert Clarke Ltd, who were barge owners and lightermen. Later it came under the ownership of Mayor Parry Recycling, who were taken over by EMR in 2001. EMR are the UK's largest buyers of both ferrous and non-ferrous metals. The majority of metals reclaimed at the Erith site are transported in 600 tonne barges across the Thames to Tilbury Docks for collection and export.



TUG PLUS

LOADED BARGE LEAVING THE SITE



EMR are also into shipbreaking on a small scale at Erith, being responsible for the scrapping of the former minesweeper HMS IVESTON, in 2015, and recently the HISPANIOLA.

SHIPBREAKING: Ex HMS IVESTON Ton class minesweeper. Built by Philips of Dartmouth in 1955. 360 tons displacement. Decommissioned 1992 and became a Sea Cadets Training Ship based at Tilbury. Scrapped at Erith in 2015

HISPANIOLA Built in 1953 as the MAID OF ASHTON, a Clyde passenger ferry. 508 gt. In 1973 became a restaurant ship on the Victoria Embankment. Scrapped at Erith 2022.



TUG BUZZ ex AICIRTRON at EMR

BUZZ: built in 1967 as the BARTOL WILTON. 109 gt. Between 1988 and 2016 operated by Thames & Medway Towage Co. Ltd. As the AICIRTRON. June 2021 up for sale by owners EMR.



EX

HMS IVESTON BEING SCRAPPED

## MYSTERY SHIPS 65



**65.1 Monchegorsk** 27.09.92 Rotterdam



**65.2 La Rabida** Spanish 19.04.92



**65.3 Hyundai Frontier** 28.02.93 Trinity Terminal, Felixstowe



**65.4 Fleur de Lys** 23.02.93 leaving Harwich harbour.



**65.5 Fiesta** 31.10.92 in Dover Straits



**65.6 Smolenek** 23 02 93 at Felixstowe

## LIBERTY SHIPS

History.

This story starts between the wars in the late 1930's.

The British Government encouraged ship builders to develop a standard ship design, so that when the "recession" ended ship owners would be able to commission a vessel that was efficient and economical to run.

J L Thompson of Sunderland came up with the Ocean Class of merchantman 400 ft long, 7500 tons, coal fired, triple expansion engine ( Design about sixty years old) Economic to run, was designed to use 15-17 tons of coal per day.



When the Second World War broke out we were in trouble, an aging merchant fleet, coupled with huge losses of tonnage to U Boat attack, yards filled with Naval orders mean that we were unable to keep up with replacing our losses.

We were in grave danger of losing the war.

In 1940 the British Technical Merchant Shipbuilding Commission went to the United States with the intent to have a fleet of 60 Ocean Class vessels built. This proved problematic as the US had just embarked on a “catch up” programme of ship building; most of the existing capacity was full

U K Commission visited various yards and a deal was struck with Todd –Bath Shipbuilders,\$100,000,000 paid in cash! Contract had three elements

New ship yards

Ships

Guarantee

A further Contract was set with Canadian yards for a further 26 vessels

By the time the Oceans had been delivered the U S Govt realised they were about to be involved in the war and like us their merchant fleet was woefully out of date, they committed to an accelerated build programme, it was decided to utilise the Ocean design as the base for a new 10,000 ton cargo ship

### **The Liberty.**

British Drawings were modified; initially the Ocean had been revised to suit U S custom and practice, as they were to be mass produced the UK drawings were somewhat lacking in detail ( Aprox 30% of the number expected in the US)for instance the engine drwgs. 80 for the Brits 550 for the US

For the envisaged production plan it was imperative to have properly toleranced drawings that would enable U S yards and machine shops to produce interchangeable parts.

Whilst the original Ocean design was based on riveted construction the decision was made to proceed with a welded construction, as the skill pool for

Riveting was non-existent this proved to be problematic as the UK manhours to produce a riveted Ocean were 336,000 Todd and the Canadian yards took 600,000 hrs this reduced to 510,000 after 20 ships they then got down to 375,00

A plan was set to build the new EC1 ships on a scale never seen before; some 2710 ships would be built in 18 yards over the next three years

There were many versions of these ships, tankers, hospital ships, troop carriers

Several companies were involved Henry Kaiser came up with the idea to prefabricate sections and then weld them together

Some yards had 50,000 workers

25% were women

Welders were trained in 4.5 weeks

1.5 million workers trained by the end of the war

5700 ships built including warships

Average build time was 46 weeks

One yard for a publicity stunt got a ship in the water in 4days 15 Hrs 30 mins

## **Problems**

Brittle fracture: There were some catastrophic failures, now attributed to Brittle Fracture, this occurs due to a change in molecular structure when steel is subjected to low temperatures a crack initiated by a stress raiser { hatch coaming corner) Poor steel quality, too much sulphur low manganese

Welding defects ( Difficult to inspect welds. No NDE as we know it)

Some 600,000 feet of welding

Alignment accuracy

Distortion

Shrinkage (Bowling up to two inches over the length)

## **Robt. Montgomery our resident Liberty**

Overloaded, draught 28 ft but drawing 31ft

Directed to Sheerness area, A/S Harbour master points out that there is only 30ft of water, overruled, ship grounds and breaks in two, attempts to unload 7500 tons of HE Bombs abandoned with 3500 tons still on board. Could result in the largest man made explosion ever.

Ships remained in service for many years, they were expendable, and one trip was all that was originally envisaged. After the war many were sold to UK and European shipping companies and steamed into the 1970s

Two preserved in the US and one in Piraeus



Liberty returning from Russia



John W Brown preserved in New York and used as a training ship



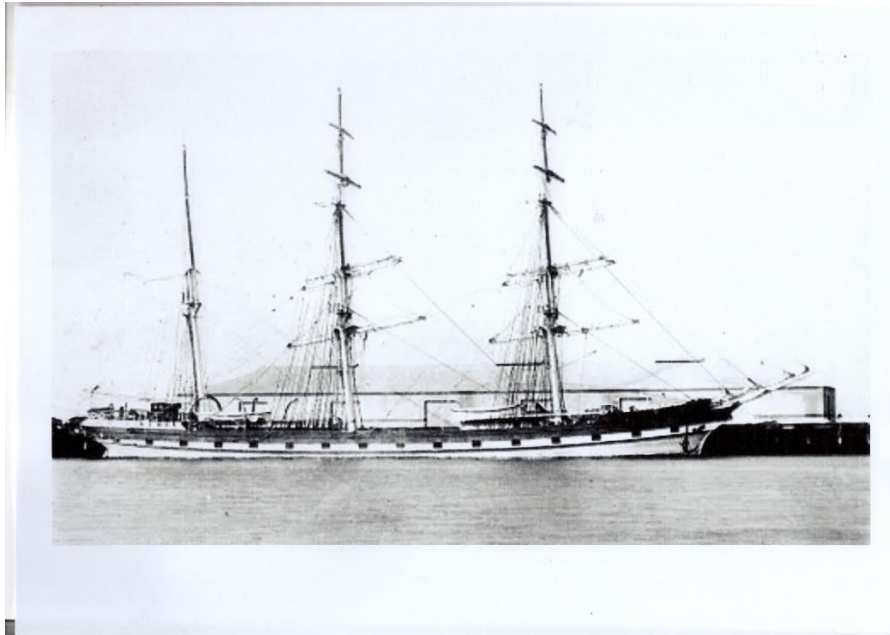
Ocean Vanguard, J L Thompson design. Lost in 1942

## **THE LADY ELIZABETH**



The Lady Elizabeth was an iron three masted barque, one of hundreds built in British shipyards towards the end of the nineteenth century. She was launched on the 4<sup>th</sup> of June 1879 at the yard of R. Thompson Junior in Sunderland for John Wilson of London. She was ordered by John Wilson to replace a ship of the same name that had been lost in 1878 off Western Australia.





Her dimensions were 223' x 35' x 21.4' and her tonnage was 1208 Gross and 1155 net. Her hull was of riveted iron and her decks were wooden. Her masts and spars were of iron and wood. In 1884 she came under the ownership of George Christian Karran. Under both of these owners she traded all over the world under the red ensign.

In 1906 she was bought by Skibasaktieseiskabet company of Sundet, Boroen, Norway, and managed by L. Lydersen. She sailed under the Norwegian flag until her last voyage in 1912. On 4<sup>th</sup> December 1912 she left Vancouver bound for Delagoa Bay in Mozambique with a cargo of timber. Halfway into the voyage, she was damaged by bad weather off Cape Horn with 4 of the crew lost overboard. Her captain decided to head for the nearest port, which was Port Stanley.



Nearing Port Stanley, she hit Uraine Rock and was holed in a couple of places, but managed to get into Port Stanley for repairs. The high cost of ship repairing in the Falkland Islands, however, made proper repairs uneconomic. In June 1913 she was condemned as being unseaworthy because of the damage, and was sold to the Falkland Island Company Ltd. for £1000 with a further £2000 for what remained of her cargo. She was converted into a floating timber warehouse.

She remained in Port Stanley performing as a warehouse until in a storm on 17<sup>th</sup> February 1936 her mooring lines failed and she drifted to her present isolated position in Whale Bone Cove in Stanley Harbour. Several small holes were cut into her hull to prevent her floating and drifting again. And there she still lies with a noticeable list to port. She is intact except for her upper masts and yards, aft living quarters and some deck fittings. Some of her Oregon Pine deck planking has also been looted. The hull is suffering severe rust leaving some large holes, so during high tides, the bottom of the ship is flooded. At times of storms and high tides however, she has been seen to rock slightly. There is a story that her upper masts etc. were taken down as they were a danger to aircraft landing and taking off from Stanley Airport, but it seems more likely that they had become potentially dangerous because of their poor condition and the list of the ship.



The wreck is now owned by the Crown Receiver of Wrecks, Port Stanley, Falkland Islands. Plans were made by the owner in recent years to salvage her and convert her into a floating museum, but due to the lack of funding, the project never got beyond the preliminary planning stage.





SHE IS VERY EXPOSED TO

STORMS

Unless major repairs are undertaken in the near future, no doubt costing millions, she will fall to pieces, and one of the last of her kind will be lost.



VIEW FROM

THE STERN



## COLINS PICTURES



Al Said Oman Muscat 02 04 18



Kardlina Split 22 09 09



**Juan J Sister** Spain Malaga 18 09 09



**Jadran** Croatia Zadair 14 10 16





**Calypso Dutch Creeksea 10 02 18**



**Aidativa Cadiz 18 04 2008**

A



**Valentine** Malta Gravend 2007

## THE SAO PAULO



**SAO PAULO**

The Brazilian former aircraft carrier hit the headlines recently when, after a long dispute between various parties, she was scuttled by the Brazilian Navy on 3<sup>rd</sup> February, some 220 miles off the Brazilian coast in 5000 metres depth of water.





FOCH

She was built by Chantiers de l'Atlantique and was originally commissioned into the French Navy in 1963 as the FOCH, a CLEMENCEAU class carrier. She was of 24,200 tonnes displacement, with dimensions 265m x 31.7m x 8.6m. Her powerplant consisted of 6 Indret boilers providing steam for 4 steam turbines producing 94,000 kW, driving 2 props and giving a top speed of 32 knots. Her range was 7500 nautical miles at 18 knots, and her original complement was 1338 including her air group. She would carry about 40 aircraft, mainly Etendards, Super Etendards and Crusaders plus several helicopters.



CLEMENCEAU

She was of the conventional CATOBAR (Catapult Assisted Take-Off But Arrested Recovery) arrangement. Originally her armament was 8 No. 100mm guns, but

in the 1990s 4 were replaced with 2 No. SACP Crotale EDIR missile launchers. A pair of Sadral launchers were added in 1997. She was modernised several times during her service with the French Navy.

In 2000 she was sold to Brazil for \$12 million, and was incorporated into the Brazilian Navy on 15<sup>th</sup> November 2000 as the Sao Paulo. The procurement agreement between France and Brazil stated that the Brazilian Navy was to be the ship's final user. She replaced the MINAS GERIAS (ex HMS VENGEANCE) as flagship. Brazil had bought 23 used A-4 Skyhawk fighters from Kuwait, and these, together with a number of helicopters formed her air arm.



MINAS GERIAS

During the ship's time with the Brazilian Navy, she suffered from serviceability issues, never managing to operate for more than 3 months at a time without the need for repairs and maintenance. Bearing in mind the age of the ship, such reliability issues are understandable. In 2005 there was an explosion in the engine room steam system, causing major damage to the machinery. From 2005 to 2013 she underwent extensive modernisation. There was another fire

in 2012 further delaying her return to service.



HMS OCEAN

Brazil had plans to modernise the SAO PAULO to serve until the late 2030s, with the work due to start in 2017. However, the Brazilian Navy decided not to carry on the modernisation programme, but to acquire a new flagship instead. A deal with the UK was struck in 2018 to buy the decommissioned HMS OCEAN as the new flagship ATLANTICO.



ATLANTICO

On 14<sup>th</sup> February 2017 the navy announced that she would be decommissioned on 22<sup>nd</sup> November 2018, as the cost of ongoing repairs was deemed uneconomic. On 12<sup>th</sup> March 2021 she was sold to breakers SOK Denizcilik in Turkey for \$1,919,857 for scrapping at Izmir. She left Rio de

Janeiro on 4<sup>th</sup> August 2022 under tow by the Dutch tug ALP CENTRE, arriving off the Moroccan coast on 26<sup>th</sup> August.



ALP CENTRE

At this point the Turkish government suddenly withdrew permission for the ship to dock in Turkey. This was after officials at the Turkish Ministry of the Environment determined that the report submitted by the Brazilian authorities significantly underestimated the amount of hazardous material on board the ship, compared to others of the same type and age. For example, the report estimated the presence of only 9.6 tonnes of asbestos when the CLEMENCEAU, her sistership, contained over 600 tonnes. The convoy reversed course and headed back to Rio.

On 13<sup>th</sup> January 2023, a survey of the ship, commissioned by the Navy, found that water was leaking into the hull. The ship was given 4 weeks by the salvage master before “it might be no longer safe to move it”. The Navy refused to have the ship brought into the dock for repairs. Instead, on 20<sup>th</sup> January the Navy forced the convoy 200 miles further offshore, announcing soon after the intention to sink the vessel. The ship was finally scuttled on 3<sup>rd</sup> February to the consternation of environmentalists from all over the world.

Breaking up, or “recycling”, to use the buzzword, French carriers seems to be somewhat tricky. The CLEMENCEAU was going to be scrapped at Alaga in India in 2005, but environmental issues raised their head, and she was eventually broken up by the specialist firm Abel Ship Recycling at Hartlepool, no doubt much more expensively.





VIRAAT

The three INVINCIBLE class of Royal Navy carriers seem to have been broken up in Turkey in the period 2011 to 2016 without anything particularly newsworthy happening. The VIRAAT (ex HMS HERMES) was broken up in India in 2021, but as she had served for many years as the flagship of the Indian Navy, perhaps not a valid case for comparison with the SAO PAULO. Two American supercarriers, the KITTY HAWK and the JOHN F. KENNEDY were each sold this year to an American breakers for one cent apiece, although Jones Act type restrictive practices may well have affected the price.



KITTY HAWK

Maybe the owners of the CLEMENCEAU and SAO PAULO were just unlucky in their timings.

# THE LOSS OF HMS FITTLETON



HMS

FITTLETON IN PORTSMOUTH HARBOUR

During a recent u3a visit to St. Peter's Church, Westcliff, my attention was drawn to a small memorial plaque on the west wall of the church. The memorial was for a parishioner, Patrick Quantrill, who had lost his life when HMS Fittleton was sunk in a collision in September 1976. I had never heard of the accident and decided to investigate it.



HMS

FITTLETON UNDER WEIGH

HMS Fittleton (M1136) was one of over a hundred "TON" class minesweepers built for the Royal Navy during the 1950s. They were wooden hulled and aluminium was used instead of steel where possible to minimise their magnetic signature, and thus their vulnerability to magnetic mines.

Displacement was 440 tons and their dimensions were 152 feet by 28 feet by 8 feet (46.3m x 8.5m x 2.4m). They were armed with a 40mm. Bofors gun and a 20mm Oerlikon gun. The WILTON, the HQ of the Essex Yacht Club, moored on the Leigh foreshore, although built of glass reinforced plastic, is of the same design.

The Fittleton was built by J. Samuel White at Cowes, being laid down on 15<sup>th</sup> September 1952, launched on 5<sup>th</sup> February 1954 and adopted into the Royal Navy on 28<sup>th</sup> January 1955. As built, she had twin Mirrlees diesels but these were replaced in March 1959 with two Napier Deltic engines of 3000 shp each driving the two propellers. Top speed was 15 knots. Her complement was normally 33.

Between 1955 and 1959, Fittleton was part of the reserve fleet based at HMS Diligence, Hythe. In March 1959 she was re-engined at Portsmouth and commissioned into the Royal Naval Reserve as HMS CURZON on 16<sup>th</sup> November 1960. She was based at Maxwell's Wharf, Shoreham, the home of the Sussex Division of the RNR. During her time with the Sussex RNR, she performed numerous exercises in the Channel, the Mediterranean and the North Sea. She was refitted at Chatham Dockyard in 1965 and 1967. She was renamed HMS FITTLETON on 1<sup>st</sup> January 1976 and re-assigned to the Channel Group of the RNR.

On 11<sup>th</sup> September 1976, she left Shoreham with the crew from the London Division RNR to take part in Operation Teamwork, a NATO exercise in the North Sea. After the exercise had been completed, she sailed with 6 other British minesweepers towards Hamburg for a three-day official visit. Fittleton was detailed on 20<sup>th</sup> September to carry out a mail transfer with the frigate HMS MERMAID, 80 miles north of Texel Island. The Mermaid was an odd looking vessel, having been designed originally as a presidential yacht for President Nkrumah of Ghana. Her displacement was some 2340 tonnes, roughly 4 times that of the Fittleton. Her foredeck was unusually short, and so her normal RAS (Replenishment At Sea) position was well forward, making a replenishment operation tricky for a smaller ship.



HMS MERMAID

The transfer required Fittleton to steam close behind and to the side of Mermaid to pick up a line. At about 3.30 pm Fittleton was caught in an area of low pressure and so was sucked closer to the Mermaid by hydrodynamic forces, "the Canal Effect". A minor collision followed and Fittleton moved forward to try to exit the situation. Unfortunately, Fittleton was hit amidships by the bow of the much larger Mermaid, and capsized within a minute. 32 survivors were picked up from the sea and the upturned hull by nearby vessels. 12 crew members were lost, including Patrick Quantrill, who was a Radio Operator PQ, based at the Southend Communications Training Centre, RNR . The hull sank between 9 and 10 pm that evening in 160 feet of water.





THE SCENE IMMEDIATELY AFTER THE COLLISION

The next day, a floating crane, the MAGNUS, lifted the wreck and took it to Den Helder, where she was made watertight. She was then towed back to Chatham Dockyard. After surveying, she was sold to Liguria Maritime of Sittingbourne for scrapping, which was carried out later in 1967. The Mermaid was decommissioned and transferred to the Royal Malaysian Navy in 1977, and eventually retired in 2018 and turned into a museum ship.



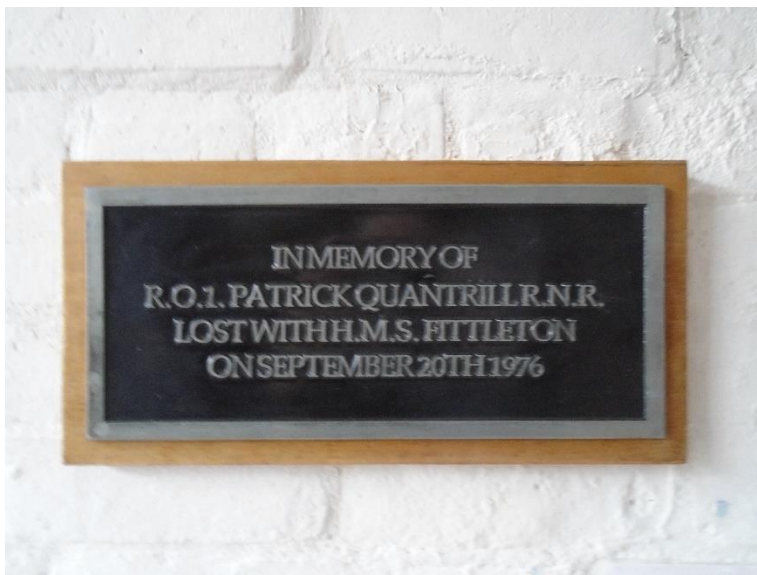
WRECK UNDER TOW IN DEN HELDER

THE

A few days after the accident, a Five-Day Court Martial was held. Lieutenant Commander Peter Paget R.N.R. was found guilty on one of four charges, “of negligently hazarding his ship by failing to reduce speed drastically and thus failing to alter away in small steps to extricate Fittleton from a dangerous

position close to the Mermaid". From what I have read, Paget was made something of a scapegoat.

Immediately after the Court Martial, Paget appealed for support of the Fittleton Disaster Fund for the dependants of the 12 who died. "I will continue to involve myself in the fund until it is finally closed. The Royal Naval Reserve is and always will be an integral part of my life". Paget died on 13<sup>th</sup> June 2016 after a long illness.



THE PLAQUE

And so to the memorial plaque on the wall of St. Peter's Westcliff. The church diary for 1977 has a couple of paragraphs regarding the plaque, and they read as follows:-

"In September 1976 HMS Fittleton had been sunk following a collision at sea. One of our parishioners, Mr. Patrick Quantrill, a Royal Navy Reservist, had been doing his annual two weeks' training at the time and was lost at sea. A memorial service was held at St. Peter's and early in 1977 the Commanding Officer of HMS Fittleton approached the Vicar and asked if a memorial plaque, which he gave the Vicar, could be displayed in church.

The Vicar and PCC were agreeable, the Diocesan Advisory Committee approved the proposal and a Faculty was obtained. The plaque was fixed in position on the west wall of the church. The Church Authorities pointed out that the plaque was only allowed because it had not been possible for Patrick Quantrill to have a burial on land – other plaques would not be approved".

# SHORT HISTORY OF A LINE-William Watkins

## PART 1

William Watkins Ltd was founded by John Rogers Watkins in 1833. His son, William Watkins, was fourteen years old when he joined his father in running the company .

When Watkins first tug, the Monarch, arrived on the Thames in 1833 the practical limit of towing from the Pool of London was Limehouse, about four miles. Power was low, coal consumption high and steering, with both paddles fixed to one shaft, erratic. To improve the steering most tugs of the time were fitted with a "chain box". heavy gear or scrap metal.. Things improved greatly when either paddle could be declutched from the shaft and more so when a separate engine drove each paddle. The limit of towing crept gradually down river, first to Woolwich, then Gravesend, and to the Nore, thirty miles down river, by 1850.

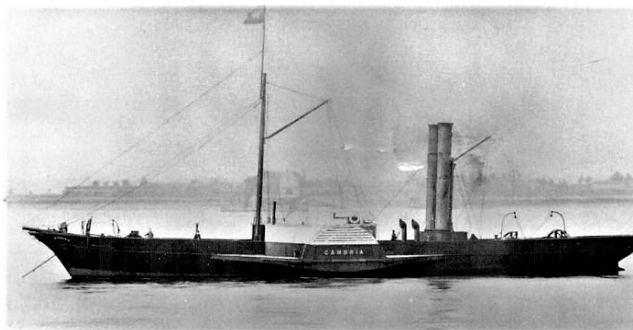
In 1853 the Britannia and Victor did tows from Deptford to Calais Roads and in 1855 Victoria towed from Portsmouth to Texel. Watkins tugs handled the launch of the Great Eastern in 1858 and 1860 saw the Victor tow a hulk from Chatham to Inverness. In 1861 Victor towed dredgers from London to Cadiz.



**Atlas 1854**



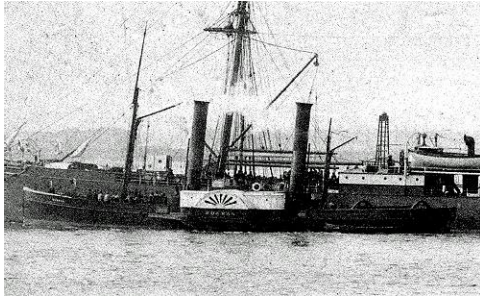
**Anglia 1866**



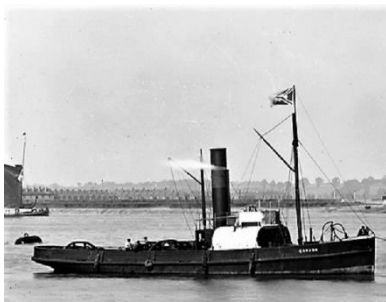
## **Cambria 1870**

Built by Thames Ironworks Anglia towed the liner Syria from St. Helena to Southampton in 1875 for a fee of £4800 and followed this by towing a dredger from Cardiff to St. Petersburg for £1350.

Cleopatras needle was famously towed from Ferrol to London by the Anglia in 1878. Sold 1918

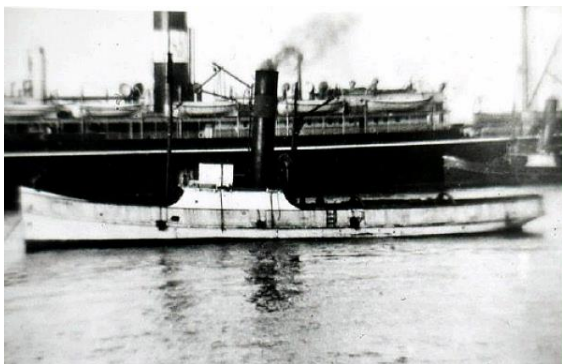


## **1876 Burmah**



## **1880 Canada**

## **1884 Columbia**



## **1895 Arcadia 1962 Scrapped Grays**

## **1905 Liberia**

In 1905 the twin screw Oceana towed the oil hulk Tancarville from Portland to Sumatra, a distance of 8200 miles in 45 days, an average speed of seven knots.





1909- 1947 **Badia**



1907 **Gondia**



1909-1947 **Doria**



1914 **Muria**

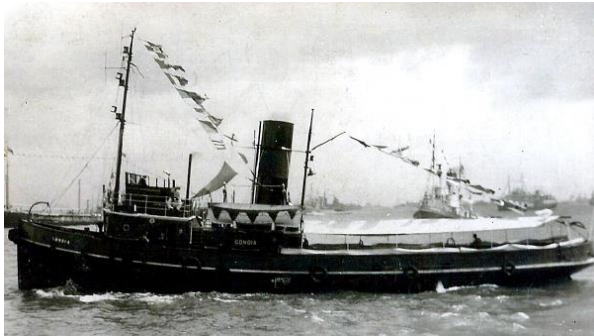


1916-1939 **Palencia**

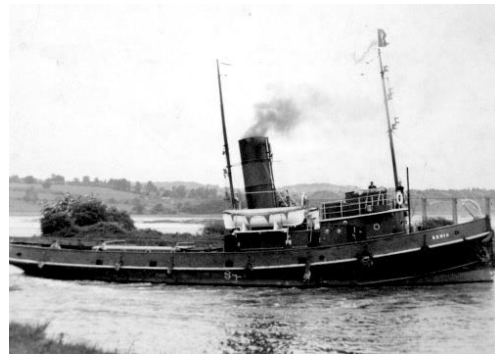
Watkins vessels were active in was "seeking", tugs going down into the English Channel and offering their services to tow sailing vessels to London or near continental ports against the foul prevailing wind. The practice continued up to the outbreak of the First World War in 1914. During the period 1833-1918 Watkins vessels were taken up for service in both the Crimean War and WW1. Their tugs were frequently chartered for use as ferries, to assist in cable laying operations, and one went on a whaling voyage to Iceland. results.



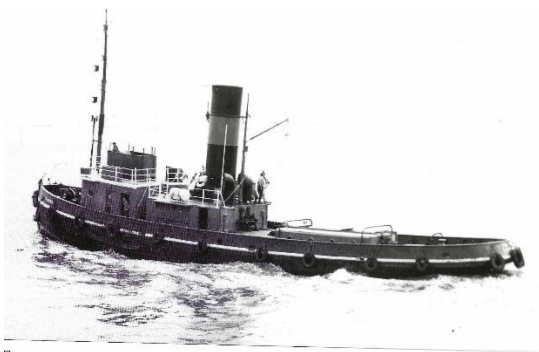
The Iona became the last paddle tug to operate on the Thames, finally being sold away from the river in 1920. Until 1950, steam reigned supreme in their fleet, although some vessels were oil fired by then.



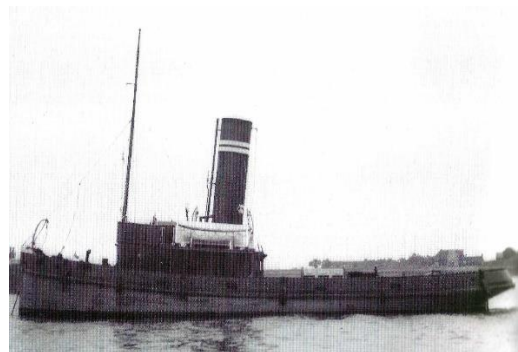
**1927-1966 Gondia**



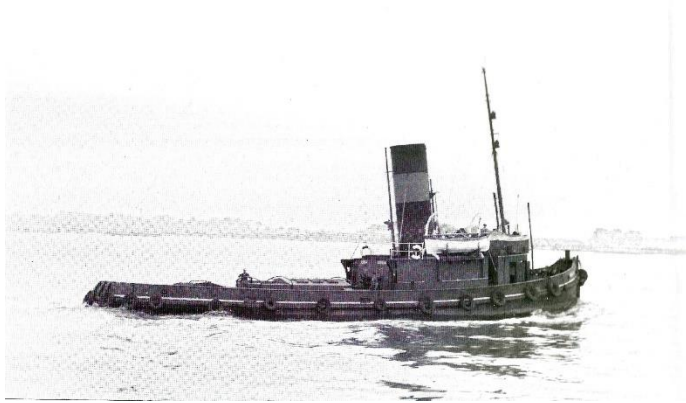
**1927-1964 Kenia**



**1931-1969 Tanga-**



**1923-1948 Tamessa**



### **1938 Racia**

By 1939 they had seventeen steam tugs. During WW2 many of Watkins tugs were requisitioned by the Government, Java is reputed to have been the first tug from Britain to reach Dunkirk, Three tugs were lost during the war, Napia and Muria both being mined, and Persia gutted by fire. When the war ended Watkins owned thirteen tugs and managed another seven for the Ministry of War Transport.

## **ANSWERS TO QUIZ 65**

- 1 ONDA: A general cargo vessel of 2650 sdwt built in 1990 was seized by 4 seafarers in Senegal amid a dispute over unpaid wages. The ship has been anchored at the Port of Dakar without power etc. for some months. Early Feb.
- 2 ARMADA SEGARA: A container ship of 7800 sdwt built in 1991 collided and dismasted the sailing yacht PATCHOULI near Singapore. The yacht was dragged along for 2 miles with its rigging caught on an anchor. Early Feb.
- 3 DMITRY DONSKOY: Russian Typhoon class nuclear powered ballistic missile submarine finally decommissioned after 40 odd years in service. Mid Feb.
- 4 MSC. IRENA: The latest largest container ship in the world left her Chinese building dock on sea trials. She is of 24,346 TEUs, with dimensions 399.9m x 61.3m. Mid Feb.

- 5 EVER GIVEN: Maersk has filed a lawsuit against Evergreen for blocking the Suez Canal for 6 days in 2021. Mid Feb.
- 6 WAN HAI 288 and RESURGENCE: The Wan Hai 288 (23,803 sdwt built in 2021) collided with the Resurgence (11,247 sdwt built in 2002) in the Long Tau river near to Ho Chin Minh City in Vietnam. Significant damage to the bow of the Resurgence and to the port bow of the Wan Hai 288. Mid Feb.
- 7 PHOBUS and DEIMOS: Former semi-submersible oil rigs had been bought by SpaceX in 2020 with plans to convert them into offshore launching platforms. Plans now ditched and the rigs sold. Mid Feb.
- 8 DAME VERA LYNN and BEN WOOLLACOT: Both were spotted on 18<sup>th</sup> Feb heading downstream bound for Chatham. The ferry service will be closed for two weeks due to technical problems. The ships costing £10 million each were built in Poland and entered service on 1<sup>st</sup> February 2019. They are battery diesel hybrid powered. The service has been plagued with problems, both technical and strike action ever since they started.
- 9 CMA CGM MARCO POLO: A big container ship has been fitted with a windshield, or “Nose Job”, rather like those common above lorry cabs on its bow in a trial. It is hoped it will produce a significant saving in fuel consumption and in the ship’s carbon footprint. Mid Feb.
- 10 CAMPO SQUARE: A Liberian flagged tanker travelling light was hit on 10<sup>th</sup> Feb. by a missile or drone some 300 nautical miles off India and Oman. The ship’s ownership is linked to Israel. The damage was slight, and the ship was able to proceed on its way.
- 11 OOCL SPAIN: The naming ceremony has taken place at Nantong, China, of the first in a series of six container ships of 24,188 TEU capacity. Late Feb.
- 12 SEAMAK: Bulker of 3197 sdwt built in 1981 and Comoros flagged broke in half at the Russian Novorossiysk anchorage in



the Black Sea. It had a cargo of about 3000 tonnes of marble chips in its hold. One reported fatality. Late Feb.

13 LAGERTHA: Chemical/Oil products tanker of 19,999 sdwt built in 2009 and Malta flagged detained by Spain due to an alleged discharge of oil near Tarragona. She will remain detained until a bail of \$106,680 is paid. Bail was apparently paid, and the ship went on her way. Late Feb.

14 MSC AURELIA: A passenger/Ro-Ro ship of 21,518 gt, built in 1980, sailed from Naples for Iskenderum in Turkey carrying 50 pallets of necessities. She is to remain in the port to accommodate earthquake victims.

15 USS ALBACORE: Wreckage found off the coast of north Japan has been identified as the USS Albacore, a Gato class submarine lost in October 1944, probably by hitting a mine. Late Feb.

## MYSTERY SHIPS 65



16  
17 **65.1** Monchegorsk 27.09.92 Rotterdam  
18

19 **MONCHEGORSK** IMO 8013039 General Cargo (with ro-ro facility)  
18,627g 23,128d Length: 177 Breadth: 24.5 Depth: 15.2 Draught: 11.3 (m)

20

21 1983: Completed by Oy Wartsila Ab, Turku as MONCHEGORSK.  
2010: Broken up in China.

22



23

24 **65.2 La Rabida** Spanish 19.04.92

25

26 **LA RABIDA** IMO 8520836 Bulk Carrier  
8,254g 11,901d Length: 143 Breadth: 20 Depth: 10.2 Draught: 7.2 (m)

27

28 1983: Completed by SA Juliana Constructora Gijonesa, Gijon as LA RABIDA.  
29 2017: Renamed DAYTONA-H.  
Still in Service.

30



31

32 **65.3 Hyundai Frontier** 28.02.93 Trinity Terminal, Felixstowe

33

34 **HYUNDAI FRONTIER** IMO 8511304 Container ship  
35 36,892g 43,567d 3,016 TEU Length:244 Breadth:32 Depth:21 Draught:12.5 (m)

36

- 37 1986: Completed by Hyundai Heavy Industries Co Ltd, Ulsan as HYUNDAI FRONTIER.
- 38 1988: Renamed LALANDIA.
- 39 1992: Renamed HYUNDAI FRONTIER.  
2002: Renamed MSC PRETORIA.  
2004: Renamed HYUNDAI FRONTIER.
- 40 2006: Renamed COSCO LIANYUNGANG.
- 41 2009: Renamed MSC CLARA.
- 42 2012: Broken up in Turkey.



- 43
- 44 **65.4** Fleur de Lys 23.02.93 leaving Harwich harbour.

**45**

- |                        |                                |             |
|------------------------|--------------------------------|-------------|
| 46 <b>FLEUR-DE-LYS</b> | IMO 7826697                    | Ro-Ro Cargo |
| 47 8,553g 5,273d       | Length:123 Breadth:18 Depth:13 |             |
| Draught:6.4 (m)        |                                |             |

48

- 49 1986: Completed by Enrique Lorenzo y Cia SA, Vigo as ROLL GALICIA.
- 50 1988: Renamed LUX EXPRESSWAY.
- 51 1988: Renamed FLEUR-DE-LYS.
- 52 1998: Renamed ATLANTICAR.
- 53 2003: Renamed VALMONT EXPRESS.
- 54 2007: Renamed V. EXPRESS. Broken up in Turkey.



**55**

- 56 **65.5** Fiesta 31.10.92 in Dover Straits

**57**

- |                  |             |                       |
|------------------|-------------|-----------------------|
| 58 <b>FIESTA</b> | IMO 7806099 | Passenger/Ro-Ro Cargo |
|------------------|-------------|-----------------------|

59 25,122g 10,500d Length:164 Breadth:23 Depth:8.6  
Draught:6.6 (m)

60

61 1980: Completed by Kockums Varv AB, Malmo as ARIADNE.

62 1980: Renamed SOCA.

63 1982: Renamed TRAPEZITZA.

64 1989: Renamed FANTASIA.

65 1989: Renamed CHANNEL SEAWAY.

66 1990: Renamed FIESTA. Converted from ro-ro cargo at Bremerhaven.

67 1996: Renamed SEAFRANCE CEZANNE.

68 2011: Renamed WESTERN LIGHT. Broken up in India.

69



70

71

72 65.6 Smolenek 23 02 93 at Felixstowe

73

74 **SMOLENSK** IMO 7910668 Ro-Ro Cargo

75 32,226g 22,447d Length:205 Breadth:31 Depth:22

Draught:9.7 (m)

76

77 1980: Completed by Valmet Oy, Helsinki as SMOLENSK.

78 1995: Renamed EUROSHIPPING THREE.

79 1996: Renamed ALYONA.

80 2010: Broken up in India.