

WORLD SHIP SOCIETY

Mid - Essex Branch

Newsletter Number 12 - August 2021

AN OCCASIONAL NEWSLETTER TO KEEP IN TOUCH DURING THIS STRANGE TIME IN OUR HISTORY

Best wishes to all of you and hope you are able to enjoy the easing of regulations. I am pleased to tell you that the Ingatestone Club is to allow us to use the committee room for our meetings and I have booked it for our first meeting on Monday 6th September. Please do not feel you have to attend if you have any reservations about meeting others in a confined space. We will look forward to meeting you later in the year. Our suggestions for Covid precautions are tabled later in this newsletter. Would branch members please study this and report back if you have any reservations or suggestions. Our best wishes are also sent to those that are not in the best of health at the moment and that they continue to improve. I'm sure that those members are in our thoughts at this time.

LOCAL NEWS

The decommissioned Arun Class Lifeboat, SIR WILLIAM ARNOLD finally left Heybridge Basin on Thursday 10th June 2021 bound for St Katherine's Dock. She arrived safely at St Katherine's several days later.



INFORMATION REQUEST

Replies to “Laid up ships in the river Stour (Essex)”

Thanks to those sending me information on ships laid up in the River Stour (Essex). When sufficient information is available to make a coherent list it will be included in our website: www.midessexships.org.uk
Anyone who has any further information please send it to me at bravedown09@live.co.uk

David Brown

CARS BUILT BY SHIPBUILDERS

by John Harrison

I read in the SAHB Times (Society of Automotive Historians in Britain) that the Thames Ironworks and Shipbuilding Company Ltd manufactured cars for a period and, short of other inspiration for an article for the Branch Newsletter thought I would research the topic a bit and also look at a couple other shipbuilders who were also car manufacturers.

The Thames Ironworks and Shipbuilding Company dates back to 1837 and had engineering and shipbuilding interests. Though the company's shipbuilding activities were concentrated on the north bank of the Thames around Bow Creek, its vehicle manufacturing took place at Greenwich. In 1899 the company merged with marine engineers Penn and Sons who had a three-acre site in Greenwich. Here around 1902 they experimented with building steam and petrol commercial vehicles. By 1905 this had become a fully fledged business and in 1906 car manufacture commenced. Both cars and commercials were marketed under the Thames name (not to be confused with Ford Thames of later years).

Car manufacture only lasted until 1911, but it seems the company produced some interesting models and quite a wide range in this short period. It introduced two models at the 1906 Olympia Motor Show; one four-cylinder and one six-cylinder. Production seems to have been somewhat sporadic but by 1910 the company offered cars with one cylinder, two cylinders, four cylinders, six cylinders and eight cylinders. The latter had a 9.5-litre engine! This advertisement from "The Autocar" of 23 July 1910 illustrates the 1910 range of cars. The reference in the advertisement to world records is interesting. In 1907 a 60hp car was driven at the then newly-created racing circuit at Brooklands to obtain a number of time and distance records. Though Thames cars were generally of a rather sedate nature, as a result of this record breaking they acquired a somewhat sporting reputation.

Another somewhat strange venture by the company in conjunction with a newly-created subsidiary, Motor Coaches Ltd, based at the Piccadilly Hotel, was a double-decker bus with a stagecoach design. The company part of Thames Ironworks, also of note, of course, as its football team evolved to become West Ham United.

Car production ceased in 1911 but the manufacture of commercial vehicles continued, but this activity had ceased by 1913 when the whole business folded due to lack of orders for new warships from the government.

Another shipbuilding company manufacturing cars was the Clyde shipbuilders William Beardmore & Co Ltd which started a car-manufacturing subsidiary in 1920 – the Beardmore company was not just involved in shipbuilding, but had wider engineering interests, so this was no doubt further diversification. The car-making subsidiary subsequently specialised in building taxis to the London Metropolitan Police specifications. In 1929 it was the subject of a management buyout and taxi manufacture was moved from Paisley to Hendon, London. Interestingly in 1966 the company was taken over by the Metropolitan-Cammell Company which in 1929 had been formed by merging the railway rolling stock business of the Cammell-Laird shipbuilding company with the Metropolitan Carriage, Wagon and Finance Co Ltd, so there is another shipbuilding connection here.

The final company I can think of is the Newcastle-based Armstrong-Whitworth Company. Like the other two companies, Armstrong-Whitworth were not just shipbuilders but a firm with wider engineering interests. In 1904 they took over the designs of another Newcastle car manufacturer, Wilson-Pilcher. They continued to produce cars until 1919 when their car manufacturing arm was merged with Siddeley-Deasy and their cars were sold under the Armstrong-Siddeley name until 1960 when manufacture ceased.

I suspect other shipbuilding companies have built cars, especially in the early years of the twentieth century before mass car production became the norm. If you are aware of any others, please contact me via our website contact form or Branch Secretary.



<https://www.gracesguide.co.uk/File:Im19100723Auto-Thames.jpg>.

John Harrison

FERRY NEWS

A new freight only (Trailers) service has started between Sheerness and Calais run by DFDS using ro ro ship MAXINE (IMO 9188245) Built 2000 by Jiangnan Changxing Shipbuilding, Shanghai as Slingeborg for Wagenborg until 2019 when renamed GOTHIA SEAWAYS until April 2021 when she became MAXINE.

A new DFDS ferry COTE D'OPALE built 2021 IMO 9858321 by China Merchants Jinling Shipyard (Weihai) Co. Ltd, has been carrying out berthing trials at Calais, Dunkirk and Dover, fortunately it did fit and will enter service soon replacing CALAIS SEAWAYS on the Dover/Calais route and be the largest ship on the channel crossing. Thanks to BREXIT it will have a large Duty Free Shop on-board.

DFDS have an option to purchase the ship from Stena Ro Ro who own the ship, in 10 years time.

A Youtube feature can be seen at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7gXvd1qDFKo>

SHIPS on the THAMES 30/07/2021

MAESTRO SAPPHIRE built 2020 seen at Tate & Lyles Thames Refinery after a voyage from Santos, Brazil.



A new one from Grimaldi, GRANDE CALIFORNIA built 2021 seen after arriving from Denince, Turkey



David Berg

FROM THE IAN WELLS COLLECTION

Two Ben Line ships that are featured in Ian Wells' London Shipping Show 1972 part 1. (PP show, N° 19)

PANDO CAPE

Built in 1954 by Alexander Stephen & Sons, Glasgow as the BALLARAT for P&O's Australian Service, primarily for the Wool trade. In 1968 she was transferred to the far eastern service and renamed PANDO CAPE. Seen here in the KGV/Royal Albert Dock arriving from Antwerp to load general cargo for Yokohama and Kobe, Japan. In late 1972 she was sold to Ben Line Steamers Ltd. and renamed BENLEDI. She arrived in South Korea in 1978 to be broken up.



© Ian Wells, taken on 4th February 1972 in KGV dock

BENVANNOCH

Built by Wm. Denny & Bros. Ltd., Dumbarton in 1954 as the CITY OF WINCHESTER for Ellerman's trade with Australia and New Zealand and occasional visits to the East Coast of North America. In 1970 she was sold to Ben Line and renamed BENVANNOCH. Sold in 1975 for scrapping at Kaohsiung, Taiwan.



© Ian Wells, taken on 1st March 1972 in the Thames

PHOTOGRAPHS FROM Milford Haven 28th June 2021

All images © David Brown



Ex RN Loyal Class (pos. Covelley Class?) Fleet Tender in Milford Haven Dock. No Name shown – anyone any information?.



BLUE STAR 1. A newcomer to the Pembroke – Rosslare Ferry service replacing Isle of Inishmore which has moved to the Dover – Calais route



SVITZER BENTLEY Now operating in the Swansea /Port Talbot area.



SVITZER KILROOM still in the Haven



THUN LIVERPOOL



RIDGEBURY LESSLEY B

COVID REGULATIONS

for the use of the Ingatestone Committee Room

- No-one to attend who has one or more of the principal COVID-19 symptoms (high temperature, persistent cough, sore throat, loss of taste or smell) within last 48 hours, or whose household includes any one with the above symptoms or who has tested positive for COVID-19.
 - Anyone considering attending should have had both vaccinations.
 - Register your attendance (track/trace).
 - The person first to arrive to open the windows regardless of the weather (please dress accordingly).
 - Arrange seating as distanced as possible with at least the equivalent of one seat between.
 - Sanitise your hands rubbing them well.
 - Wear a face covering until you're seated. Face coverings are then optional.
 - Observe social distancing where possible.
 - It's still helpful to follow Hands, Face, Space
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SHIPS, TILBURY & GRAVESEND

Monday Afternoon 2nd August 2012

Featuring SPIRIT of DISCOVERY

All images © David Brown



ALF POLLAK



CITY OF LONDON



CITY OF WESTMINSTER



HANS



HELENA



PATROL



SD DOLPHIN

ELBSUN



HARINGVLIET



NORSKY



RT EVOLUTION



SPIRIT of DISCOVERY



SPIRIT of DISCOVERY



SPIRIT of DISCOVERY



SPIRIT of DISCOVERY



SPIRIT of DISCOVERY



STARNES



THAMES SWIFT



VIOD 2 Dutch coaster built in 1958

David Brown

Images are in alphabetical order, not chronological.

All images © David Brown

The oldest ship of the day was HANS. Built in 1916 by G Muller in Amsterdam, Groningen, Netherlands for Ganger Rolf, Amsterdam. She was an active trader around the Norwegian coast until 2003. She was acquired by J M Dines Marine Services boatyard, Maldon, Essex for conversion into a support vessel for film work but conversion was halted due to new regulations and she was sold on for conversion to a live-work home. Now based at the Hermitage Community Moorings at Wapping on the Thames

I hope you have benefitted from the varied miscellany of news, articles and images etc. in our 12 editions of our “lockdown” newsletters. Let us hope that we will now move back to some sort of normality. Barring any change in regulations this will be the final newsletter from the Mid-Essex Branch.

Please feel free to contact us to add or correct any of the articles found here or indeed in any of the previous editions.

Apologies if any copyright is breached. Please contact us so that we can make amends and include any credits.

However we will be interested to hear from anyone who has information to add to Ships Layed up in the River Stour, (Essex) which is an ongoing Branch project.

Please take care of yourselves and we look forward to our meeting on 6th September.

Newsletter compiled by David Brown

My thanks go to those that have contributed to this edition:

David Berg, David Brown, John Harrison, Andrew Smith, and Ian Wells.

If you have any comments about this or previous newsletters please contact me at bravedown09@live.com

or through our website contact form:

<http://www.midessexships.org.uk/contact.html>

David Brown, Secretary,

WSS MID-ESSEX BRANCH