

ADLS NEWS

WINTER 2013



NEWSLETTER OF THE ASSOCIATION OF DUNKIRK LITTLE SHIPS

From the Editor

For me personally, it's been a funny old year. Following a disappointing start to the season, the Medway River Festival was a welcome surprise, and will be an event not to miss in the future. To enjoy a Trad Boat Rally at Henley in good weather, and to make it to the fabulous Vets Cruise weekend without nearly writing off the boat made for a successful summer. And yet I have spent less time cruising than in any year since we joined the ADLS. Apart from a few lazy days on the upper Thames, it has been a 'there and back' season with no extra-curricular adventures. Next year I hope to break out from the normal run of events and get more sea miles in; I'm sure many of you will echo the sentiment! Getting our boats seaworthy and sorting out any problems in the summer before a Return may well stand us in good stead. The commemorative cruise on the Medway at Chatham followed by a run across to Ostend, weather permitting, will be a good start, but for most of us finding time to get away seems increasingly difficult.

I have had my wings clipped a little as political correctness continues to infiltrate our lives in its insidious fashion, so I believe there is nothing in these pages that could possibly offend anyone. I was also planning to include a 'page of shame'; current photos of DLS which by wilful neglect or apathy are deteriorating towards the probability of being beyond redemption, but perhaps fortunately did not have space this time!

There's a fresh feel to this edition, thanks to Tony of Tomkins Print who stepped in at short notice after my previous co-producer retired himself at the last minute. Hopefully next winter's will be back at the earlier time, this one is particularly late as the last important report did not arrive until 28th December. Articles for inclusion are always welcome, in particular a fresh take on one of our regular events, so don't be shy.....



Our Retiring Commodore writes:

To all members of the ADLS.

I find it very difficult to accept praise for something I undertake to do and which falls comfortably within my capabilities and experience so I found it a bit embarrassing to accept the accolades over my two years as Commodore with the trials and tribulations of the QDJP. Having said that, I was very proud to accept the decanter and glasses presented to me on my "retirement". It was gratifying to realise the strength of feeling involved from the Association.

I find it difficult to find the right words at such times but I wish to say to the Association as a whole and especially to the members that took part in the events during my two years that I felt it a great honour to lead you on the water and represent you at events ashore. I regard the ADLS as the best yacht club in the world. It is certainly the most exclusive and I will always remember the feelings of pride in the way you all conduct yourselves on the water. Overall the standard of seamanship displayed is excellent and the envy of other clubs and organisations. It is also good to see the less experienced being helped and advised by the old hands. I am now looking forward to following Ian to Dunkirk as I feel he is a very capable organiser and will lead the Association very well. I am also very impressed with the way the new committee team has gelled. It augurs well for the future.

Best wishes and good sailing to you all.

Richard Basey, IPC.

SARDONIC SUNDOWNER

It's warm up in the wheelhouse here

Perhaps its all the ouzo

I drank before I switched to beer

I thought it wise to do so.

There's no room on the table, alas

So food can wait till later.

"Just bring another drink, Alan"

I tell my friendly waiter.

What was it that he offered me?

I've finished half the bottle.

The nectar of the gods, maybe;

Or that of Aristotle

I'm really getting rather high

The conversation's quite frenetic

A line of seagulls passes by

Ye gods! They're energetic

Malt whiskey trickles down my throat

By now I'm quite unstable

The sun sinks slowly in the West

And I, beneath the table.

Dennis Kinnell, (modified ed.)

From the Bridge



I am writing this having just presided over the 46th Laying Up Supper at the Leander Club. It provided a great finale to my first season at the helm of the Association. The excellent food and company was only exceeded by the satisfaction of introducing four new members - indeed it would have been five had not the new owner of Lazy Days been forced to cancel. With many clubs, and particularly sailing clubs, suffering declining memberships we are indeed fortunate that there seems to be sufficient people out there who are prepared to take on the responsibility of caring for our Little Ships when the time for a change of ownership arrives. Of course without new 'blood' the Association will gradually decline. Despite the fact that there are now few direct personal connections with the Dunkirk evacuations, the concept of the 'Spirit of Dunkirk' remains as relevant today as it ever did. Long may the Association be revitalised by new and enthusiastic owners. 2013 saw a busy sailing season for the Little Ships with highlights including the Commemorative Cruise to Ipswich and the Veterans Cruise. 2014 promises to be an equally engaging year. For our Commemorative Cruise we will be heading to Chatham on the River Medway followed by a trip

across the Channel where we will be the guests of Ostend at Anchor. Looking further ahead I am delighted to be able to report that the civic authorities of the town of Dunkerque are very much looking forward to welcoming us back in May 2015. At the time of writing there are 555 days to go to our departure for the Return and we are starting to put in place the plans for what is sure to be a memorable event which will generate considerable media attention. With support promised from the Royal Navy, Battle of Britain Memorial Flight, RNLI and the Maritime and Coastguard Agency, it would be wonderful if we could get over 50 Little Ships together for the event. It is at times like this, with the prospect of leading such an event, that I am drawn to the saying 'experience is something you don't get until after you need it'. Well, I am very privileged that on the Committee I am supported by enthusiastic people who provide the experience that I am striving to get. Indeed three ex-Commodores continue to serve so I am never short of sage words. The work that members of the ADLS committee perform, on what at times seems like a full-time basis, goes largely unrecognised - twas ever thus. We are trying to make the activity of the committee more transparent and approved committee minutes are now posted on the members section of the ADLS website for all to read. The committee meets four times a year at the Naval Club in London. If any member wishes to come along and observe what goes on, then they would be most welcome - we don't expect to be 'crushed in the rush'! In any case, please do come along to the Association AGM in early March. It is your opportunity to have your say about how your Association is run. So now it just leaves me to wish you fair winds and following seas. I hope to see you on the water in 2014.

Ian Gilbert Commodore

For details of all the forthcoming events please keep your eye on the 'Events tab' of our website www.adls.org.uk.

EVENTS

[Annual General Meeting 7th March, 2014](#)

The Naval Club, 38 Hill Street, Mayfair, London. W1J 5NS; 1900 for 2000hrs.

All members and associates are encouraged to attend and express their views on the way their Association is being run.

Members are asked to note that as is usual for London clubs, a jacket and tie or smart casual dress is required in the public rooms.

[47th Fitting Out Supper 12th April, 2014](#)

The Royal Thames Yacht Club, London. Contact Mr Trevor Phillips, Hon Events Secretary -email events@adls.org.uk.

[Commemorative Cruise 2014 23rd-26th May, 2014](#)

Chatham, Kent

Contact Commodore

[Ostend D-Day Celebrations 29th May-1st June, 2014](#)

Contact Commodore

[Medway River Festival \(Prov. date 12th July, 2014\)](#)

Contact Kelly Tolhurst

[36th Thames Traditional Boat Rally 19th & 20th July, 2014](#)

Fawley Meadows, Henley-on-Thames

Contact Tony Goodhead

[Veterans Weekend 6th & 7th September, 2014](#)

Little Ships will be based at Thames Motor Yacht Club (TMYC), Hampton Court. Further details of the event will be posted nearer the time.

[St Katherine Dock Clasic Boat Festival \(Prov. 12th & 13th September, 2014\)](#)

Contact Events Secretary

[47th Laying Up Supper 15th November, 2014 \(18:30 - 23:30\)](#)

The 2014 Laying up Supper will be held at Bisham Abbey near Marlow. Bisham Abbey is a Grade I listed manor house at Bisham in the county of Berkshire.

Overnight accommodation is available:

Bisham Abbey National Sports Centre

Bisham Village, Marlow Road, Bisham, Marlow. SL7 1RR.

http://www.bishamabbeynsc.co.uk/bisham_abbey/Home

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Bluebird of Chelsea saved by prompt action on the Thames



It was a promising start. The weather was fair and with a mounting sense of excitement the crew and Martin Summers, owner of 'Bluebird of Chelsea' greeted his daughter's guests aboard. She had just returned for a visit from her successful acting career in Los Angeles and wanted to host a drinks party aboard dad's beautiful Dunkirk Little Ship. After all friends arrived, Bluebird slipped and proceeded down river as guests chatted excitedly and admired the spectacle of the sights of London surrounding them in all its variety and beauty.

As we passed quietly downstream under Charing Cross Railway Bridge, waving to passers-by on the new footbridges everything changed from joy to horror. The skipper emerged from below, took the wheel and calmly announced "We're sinking, we're making for that pier". The speed and nature of the situation was frighteningly unexpected. As the skipper turned the boat we saw a rush of water swirling into the saloon below us. Fortuitously the pier was that of the RNLI. At first they were not keen to receive a civilian boat, this was, it appeared, because they were busy saving someone who had jumped off a bridge. After the skipper radioed the problem, they called us in and made space to tie-up.

When we got to the pier the life boatmen and women sprang into action. Once secured, guests speedily disembarked and Martin stood aghast, as even with the three pumps aboard we could see that Bluebird was going down. We swiftly gathered up things of sentimental value as the water rose and lapped our knees.

Once everybody was off the boat the lifeboatmen came on board to assist and assess the situation. At that point a lifeboatman put it to me crisply and succinctly, "I suggest you take anything of value and get off the boat NOW, sir". So we stood by dumbfounded and helpless on the pier as pumps battled in vain with the inrush of water and we could see the beloved boat losing the fight. But then within minutes

reinforcements arrived in the shape of the Police boat and the Fire Rescue boat. With incredible speed the Fire Boat deployed a very large diameter pump which held the situation precariously steady and the boat sinking no further.

Meanwhile with haste the life boatmen found where the water was coming in; a roughly 6" diameter hole just below the waterline. Though we had been prepared with various bungs, this was a big hole. A resourceful police officer appeared with a road cone! This was the bung required. It fitted the hole wonderfully. With underwater cement the edges were sealed, the cone secured tightly inside and the gush of water turned to a trickle. This was the turning point. The mighty pumps started to win and soon the waterline was where it should be again. We breathed an almighty sigh of relief. It had been touch and go.

Although a leisurely evening had been rudely interrupted, Blue bird of Chelsea and its passengers and crew had been saved by the cool and rapid reactions of the skipper and the prompt and effective help given by the RNLI, the Fire Rescue service and the Police. Without the great fortune to be near the pier and without their help the evening could have had a very different and even tragic ending.

I will never complain again about the wake of the Fire Rescue boat, the Lifeboats and the Police boat rocking my boat when speeding by! I have nothing but admiration for them and their calm, professional and effective action which saved a historic boat from disaster.

Much relieved after a tumultuous and emotional evening, we suggested a well-earned drink after they had towed us back to Cadogan Pier with the traffic cone still locked in place, but of course they were "on duty" and declined. We hope to meet them again and thank them when they are not on duty!

Blue bird of Chelsea is now at Burnham on Crouch awaiting an insurance claim and subsequent repairs.

Tim Epps

Michael Stephens

Herewith a photo of Michael Stephens with maximum passengers raising funds for Fowey Lifeboat station.



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Aquabelle



For the first time in more than three years Aquabelle has sailed under her own twin 6-cylinder diesel power. She is seen here in the River Lez between Montpellier and the Mediterranean Sea, crewed by some of the Frenchmen who have been working on her restoration as volunteers. Although her superstructure, decks and interior are nearing completion, her hull will require further work. Planned to be undertaken before the end of the year "Le Grand Carénage" will take her out of the water to enable hull paintwork to be stripped. The volunteers know that a small number of her oak planks will need replacement before the hull is returned to her original pristine white above water finish. Our thoughts are now turning to the logistics challenge placed upon us by aspiring to return Aquabelle to the UK for the 2015 Re-enactment Crossing. Any offers of advice or assistance from fellow ADLS members would be welcomed.

Colin Dimbylow, 31/10/13

Dowager



We have had Dowager out of the water since the middle of August, hopefully weather permitting we can relaunch her in the early part of next week (written 28. Oct). We had the hull back to bare wood, and it has been a slow progress getting

her repainted. She looks really good now. Also, we have had work done on the engines as one of the dynamos needed replacing.

All expensive business old wooden boats! Hopefully Dad is happy how she looks now.

John & Sarah Shirley

Elsa II



The lovely Elsa II is a 32ft Thorneycroft motor cruiser which has been languishing in Michael Dennett's boat yard for over 20 years. A succession of owners with great intent to restore her have so far all failed to do so. Now Gillian of Henley Sales and Charter has finally found new owners in the shape of Chris and Shelley Brightman, who are very keen to take the project on and return Elsa to her former glory and cruise with the fleet over to Dunkirk in 2015. Extensive works have already started at Michael Dennetts, as the only structure to survive are the hull and deck beams. It is hoped to have Elsa back on the water as early as Summer 2014, hopefully taking part in some of the Associations planned events.

Heather Dennet

Elvin

Busy year for Elvin again. Highlights were firstly a trip up the east coast with the ADLS to Ipswich where we welcomed Archie Buchanan's son John and his family on board. He brought his father, Archie's, actual account of his trip to Dunkirk (12 pages) with him and this can now be read on Elvin's website. I had no idea it still existed! We learnt that after her return from Dunkirk, Elvin was requisitioned by the admiralty, painted grey and with a Sampson post in her cockpit and strongback fitted, was the Lowestoft harbour tug from 1940-46 and manned by the WRNS most of the time.

On our way out of the Orwell, we found Ryegate II with engine seized close to a sandbank and towed her back to Shotley Marina. We then cruised down the east coast for a few days before meeting Adrian Edmondson and his TV crew from ITV at Chatham. We had a pleasant two days filming

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for his TV programme "Ade at Sea." We circumnavigated the Isle of Sheppey, did Whitstable, Shivering Sands forts, Queenborough, and were one of the first boats to moor up at the new "Thames gateway" port at Stanford Le Hope; then Limehouse and back up the Thames to Hampton (Elvin got her MCA commercial ticket to enable her to do this.)

Then various outings including the Veterans weekend at TMYC when I got a Dunkirk's veteran's blood on my hands for the first time when I had to stitch his head back together after a "Trip" on Gay Venture! This was followed by a stay up at St. Katherine Docks with other ADLS boats for the Mayor's Thames festival.

The final great day out on Elvin was on 19th October when we reunited Graham and Bruce Scott with Elvin. Their Dad had bought Elvin in Essex in 1949 and with his wife and three children he moved her to tie up at the lock at Penton Hook and they lived on her for about five years and Graham and Bruce went to school from her. They brought some of their family and Elvin's Thames Conservancy plaque from 1951 and we had a lovely trip up the river to her old mooring.

Elvin has such a fantastic documented history; it is a privilege to be her custodian for a time.

Firefly



Recently acquired by its new owners Mark and Penny Webb from long term custodians Brian and Val Green, Firefly is now safely moored on the Swale in Kent.

A recent survey reveals her to be in lovely condition.. but there are plenty of small jobs to complete. New port-light rubbers will be followed in due course by a smart new teak hatch and gas locker, hopefully by the summer.

Incidentally, recent research reveals one of her former keepers (from 03/07/1930 to 31/08/1931) to have been William Archibald Bury Commander RN. who was awarded the DSO. for his part in the Zeebrugge and Ostend raids of 1918 ('Eleven VC's Before Breakfast'). Bury was the

engineer who laid and detonated the charges that scuttled HMS. Vindictive at Ostend. Following his being injured he was then apparently the last to leave her.

We have checked the bilges....

Chico



Chico had another busy season this summer, earning her keep as a charter yacht based on the west coast of Scotland. Spring and early summer was spent around the Firth of Clyde before moving up to Oban with cruises to the islands of Jura, Mull and Coll, and a trip to Loch Ness on the Caledonian Canal.

Mechanically and electrically she has been relatively trouble free, but exterior maintenance is, of course, never ending!

Massey Shaw



Hopefully by the time this information goes to print Massey should be back on the Thames on completion of her restoration. However as I write , she is still in Gloucester Dock awaiting final certification trials, which we hope to complete in the next week or so depending upon weather and logistical problems being overcome.

The work on Massey has taken some four years and this has been brought about thanks to the support of the Heritage Lottery Fund who have provided over a million pounds for the restoration and our dedicated band of volunteers who have

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keep faith with the programme . In addition to this the Society has been able to develop its educational programme, which tells the unique history of a Thames Fireboat during nearly forty years of service on the river . We have produced an interactive drama which tells the story of the AFS - Auxiliary Fire Service- during the Blitz, plus information on the importance of Fireboats in supplying water to the land-based crews.

One of the primary concerns throughout the works has been to preserve as much of the original vessel as possible, and we are very pleased that we have managed to do this in the majority of cases. The original teak decking which had been 'holy stoned ' away by successive generations of firemen has been put to new use by providing new flooring throughout the craft and new galley fittings. Thus the decks on which the solders from Dunkirk bled are still aboard the vessel and protected by new teak decking. We have also retained some of the bumps and scrapes on the steel hull , as we have found from our research that many of them tell a story and stimulates our older visitors. The restoration has also proved to be a voyage of discovery for our volunteers and contractors as the vessel slowly unveiled its secrets. We now have a better understanding of how Massey Shaw works and have the documented evidence to pass on to future generations . Our next adventure is getting to use the new vessel and train our new crew in readiness for 2014 and our trip across the Channel with the Association in 2015.

David Rogers, Hon. Company Secretary & Director
Massey Shaw & Marine Vessels Preservation Society
Web: www.masseyshaw.org | www.londonfireboat.com
| Facebook | Twitter

Medway Queen

Medway Queen's hull has been rebuilt at the Albion Dockyard and has made her journey back to the Medway. The Christine, operated by A. J. & A. Pratt of Rainham arrived in Bristol on Sunday 13th October and Medway Queen was handed over to the MQPS soon afterwards. She came out of the dock on 24th of October and was moored in the Floating Harbour. On Thursday 31st October the ship began her journey down the river Avon. She waited in Avonmouth for a 48 hour clear weather window for the next leg of her journey. The MQ arrived in the Medway.18-19.11.13. The only Dunkirk Little Ship attending was RYEGATE 2, and about 30 other assorted boats appeared at various places on the way up river. Alan Pratts tugs NIPASHORE and CHRISTINE did an effortless operation and all secured by 13.45. The Svitzer Tug SVITZER HARTY gave a farewell water display.



The rebuild of Medway Queen's hull and the establishment at Gillingham were only possible due to substantial grants from the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) and the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF). Fitting out will take place at Gillingham Pier but progress will be slow until we attract additional support. A Completion Fund is running for donations towards finishing the job. We are applying to grant giving bodies for aid but all require partnership funding. The game is changing and in 2014 we have to strengthen the volunteer input; needing not only craftsmen but also organizers and administrators. The Medway Queen Visitor Centre will re-open when the ship returns to Gillingham although the hours of opening are not yet agreed. Please keep an eye on our website for details. Whatever your skill we can almost certainly put it to good use, so give us a ring on 01634 575717 or contact the Medway Queen Preservation Society, Gillingham Pier, Pier Approach Road, Gillingham. Kent ME7 9RX.

Richard Halton
Medway Queen Preservation Society
www.medwayqueen.co.uk



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MTB102



MTB102 has had a busy Summer starting with a trip to Southampton Maritime Festival in the dockyard. This was a 400mile round trip for 102 and, and consumed several litres of diesel. The return trip was exceptional for the absolute flat calm of the sea which encouraged us to make the 200 miles through the night. Since then MTB102 has attended the ADLS Commemorative Cruise to Ipswich, the Brightlingsea Boat Show, Harwich Sea Festival, Gt. Yarmouth Maritime Festival and the Thames Festival at St. Katharine Dock. Also we had a small argument with our own pontoon which needed five weeks of care and attention to repair the damage. 102 should now have a rest for the winter months and hopefully be ready for action again next May. Now we are into November we can reveal that MTB102 acted as PT109, John Kennedy's boat, in a film made for National Geographic called "Seven Days That Made a President". The film was released on the 11th and can be found on the internet.

Richard Basey, MTB102 Trust.

Nyula



After a long winters work replacing the stem, scarping in 5 plank ends on each side, numerous parts of frames, 4 beam shelf ends, together with the multitude of other maintenance

requirements, we were more than ready for the cruising season, and set off for Ipswich with high hearts. The Canal and River Trust unfortunately had other ideas, and closed Cromwell Lock, which drops the river Trent onto the tideway the day we left. The winter floods had deposited a bank of gravel in the lock tail (which apparently they had been aware of since January), and as in their wisdom they have sold off or allowed to fall into disrepair most of their dredging equipment, removing it was proving a slow process. Hints of the closure reached us en-route, but we pressed on to see for ourselves what was happening. At the lock we could see a clear channel around the sandbank, and the lockkeeper had been allowing boats through after advising them of the route to take, but as is inevitable, some fool in a twin screw motorboat had ignored the advice and ploughed straight into the 'hump' and trashed both propellers. He then blamed the lockkeeper, and sued CRT, who promptly closed the lock to all traffic. No amount of bribery or corruption could persuade the lockkeepers to allow us through, "orders is orders", and after considering other options including road transport we reluctantly retraced our steps back to my brother's moorings near Nottingham. We went to Ipswich by car, the first time we have failed to make a commemorative cruise in Nyula. Thanks CRT.

With a subcontract dredging team called in, the lock was re-opened in time for a run down to the Medway River Festival, then subsequently the Trad Rally and Vets Cruise. The only grounding this year was at low water just before dawn immediately upstream of the Humber Bridge, which is a regular and almost inevitable occurrence. The channel is well buoyed up the bridge, then there are no markers and you have to guess for a while (unless you have bought the latest chart which are issued every 2 months, of course I hadn't, only deciding to go via the Humber instead of Boston at the last minute). After nearly two hours of searching for the channel whilst ploughing through the soft mud we eventually spotted it (it was light by then!) and ran with the tide all the way up to Trent Falls and Cromwell, then home. The lower reaches of the Humber are incredibly busy with commercial traffic, much more so than the Thames although the ships are generally smaller, and a passage up the estuary in the dark is an amazing experience and more than makes up for the slightly longer journey.

This winters work on Nyula is progressing in fits and starts with a galley replacement, and some very labour intensive work outside in an attempt to regain some of her original 1933 appearance; the more observant next season may spot what has changed!

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Sundowner



The hull is now over 100yrs old, the conversion to a family boat from a Naval harbour launch being done in 1930. During the last 30 years she has had two or three major refits and is in good working order.

Sundowner is owned by the Steam Museum Trust (www.steammuseum.org), moored in an attractive berth in the inner harbour at Ramsgate and is a frequent talking point regarding the Dunkirk story.

During our visit to the Medway Festival in the summer we noticed one of the engine cylinders is blowing exhaust, so a job for the near future will be to remove the head. Looking a little further ahead, some rotten timber in the stem needs replacing and the condition of the hull beneath the cabin floor needs to be examined.

We look forward to Chatham in May

Jim Harris

Wanda



Another year has passed! It only seems like yesterday that I was seated at my laptop writing 'Fleet News' for 2012, but what a busy year it has been.

A new galley was installed over the last winter with thanks to Colin and Stephen Messer which resulted in greatly

improved storage and worktop facilities. The new cooker, as one would expect, now meets all the safety requirements, so no more worries over gas taps being turned on accidentally although the discipline is that the main gas tap is turned off when not required. A new 'toy' in the galley is the installation of a microwave oven and as we can generate our own 240 volts, warm sausage rolls, pies and pasties are available whilst underway.

Our year kicked off with the fitting out supper at the Thames Motor Yacht Club who provided us with an excellent meal and hospitality. Next was the commemorative cruise to Ipswich which was split into various stages. (1) Windsor to Teddington where we joined up with PAPHILLON, HILFRANOR and L'ORAGE. (2) Next day to Imperial Wharf and a nice evening meal. (3) Our little convoy sailed down the Thames and into the Medway for an overnight mooring at Queenborough. The weather had deteriorated on arrival with a brisk breeze which made for some fun in mooring, both on the cement barge and the hammer head.

The next day we sailed up to Brightlingsea where we joined up with other DLS before moving on to Ipswich being met by the Harwich Life Boat who escorted us up the Orwell. The combined fleet when moored in the harbour looked great and attracted a large number of visitors crowding onto the pontoons all eager for a closer look and to ask questions about the little ships and our histories.

On the Tuesday morning at 07.00hrs, *WANDA* in company with *JANTHEA* and *L'ORAGE* slipped our moorings heading for Imperial Wharf which we achieved in just over 12 hours, a long day through some very wet weather. But a good hot meal in a local hostelry revived all our spirits. The next day we all sailed for our respective home moorings.

In July, *WANDA* took part in the Medway River Festival, then the Thames Traditional Boat Rally followed by a trip, further up river to The Swan pub at Streatley, organised by John & Sally (*L'ORAGE*) in company with *JANTHEA*, *LADY GAY*, *HILFRANOR*, *TOM TIT* and *CHUMLEY*.

September saw us at the, not to be missed, Vets Cruise which with the generous help and hospitality of the Thames Motor Yacht Club is now better than ever. In my opinion, this two day event is a truly emotionally charged experience, meeting and talking to the veterans from Dunkirk, D-Day, Korea, South Atlantic (Falklands) to current conflicts.

This was followed by the Thames Festival in St. Katharine Docks, London which was enjoyed by all but the weather was not very kind.

The year has been finally wrapped up with an excellent evening in the Leander Club for our Laying Up Supper. The meal was delicious and the wine flowed freely. A fitting end to a very enjoyable season.

"Rib Crush rib Crush, request 2 to go ashore from Nyula swinging mooring no. 10, over"
 The festival was gearing itself up as we made our call to the trot boat which was kept busy most of the day ferrying crews backwards and forwards to the shore. For us the festival was the culmination of a week long passage from Nottingham, and we were pleased to be blessed with the most glorious weather imaginable.

For those who have not moored here before, our rallying point the previous day at Rochester Pier provides a very pleasant surprise. Run by Medway Council, it was saved from being sold



into private ownership by the intervention of 'Councillor Kelly', who got herself elected for that very purpose. Available at all states of the tide, it is secure, and the outer gates are locked at "sunset" My definition of sunset is a bit different to the council man, on Thursday my crew who had nipped out for a takeaway was dismayed, as was I, to find himself locked out at 8.15 with the sun



still shining! Eventually, having drawn a blank with other options I picked him up from some steps at the other side of the river, the state of tide being favourable. The backdrop to the pier is the romantically crumbling Castle; and the delightful high street with its quirky shops is just around the corner.

The fleet arrived in dribs and drabs, with everyone looking relaxed and happy in the sunshine and light winds. "Its days like this that make you realise what all the hard work was for" said Alan (Riis 1) after his perfect crossing from West Mersea. A fish and chip supper was the popular choice, Councillor Kelly having procured a gate key to make returning to our moorings a little less stressful.



The Festival itself is only in its second year, and was a credit to Medway Council; in these times of 'austerity' it cannot be easy to start and grow a new event. I suspect a little influence from C. K. On the water, the most impressive display came courtesy of one of the Switzer Tugs who came up from Gravesend to give a demonstration of their fire fighting gear and wash making ability.

Flying Fish Hovercraft from Sandwich flew up and down through the moorings, and the Medway Towns Rowing Club, Medway Watersports Trust, (canoeing, kayaking), Medway Yacht Club (dingy racing) all added to the spectacle. Ashore could be found many interesting stands and displays, a funfair, and live music. The good weather and friendly atmosphere ensured the event was very well supported by the public. The DLS's provided a fabulous backdrop to the event, and certainly encouraged the public to look outwards to the activities





on the water. There was even a suicide threat from a drunk on the edge of the quayside, which gave the Medway River Police in their £5 million ex RNLI prototype, (which they can't afford to refuel very often) and attendant jet skis something to really get their teeth into. After a little while however the suicidal drunk rather providentially fell asleep and was bundled to safety and custody.

Constraints of tide and shore access meant an early afternoon start to the Historic Vessels Sailpast and for us a return straight back to Rochester Pier. Councillor Kelly "shoreside" handled the increasingly inane questions on the R.T. (not from DLS I hasten to add) with admirable restraint before doing the commentary for the entire sailpast.

After extensive pre-prandials in the evening sunshine we hove over to the nearby Medway C.C. clubhouse for supper. A little thirsty after the two minute walk, more drinks were procured and we wandered outside only to be immediately hauled back in as 'drinking outside (on the clubs own private patio) was not permitted under the clubs licence'. After this rocky start things improved steadily, the Dunkirk

spirit surfaced, blind eyes were turned and common sense, that rare and beautiful thing prevailed. In spite of Councillor Kelly's best efforts the chef was not really prepared for the number of people, but we all got fed well one way or another and had a great evening.

C. Kelly, 'her' team, and Morris worked hard to make the event the great success that it was; the fast flowing tide whilst adding life and urgency to the spectacle must have caused many headaches!

I know Kelly is using her position on the council to fight for all boater's interests in this part of the Medway, and this showcase event is testament to her efforts.

ADLS boat attending:

Lijns Sundowner Riis 1 Tom Tit Nyula Wanda Mary Scott
Latona Elvin



Regeneration, Community and Culture
Medway Council
Gun Wharf
Dock Road
Chatham
Kent
ME4 4TR
Telephone: 01634 338255

Dear Mr Knight

MEDWAY RIVER FESTIVAL

We just wanted to take this opportunity to thank you for supporting the Medway River Festival.

It was a fantastic day with a great atmosphere and lots of activity both on and off the River. The hard work and enthusiasm from everyone involved really showed, and you all played an integral part in the success of the day.

This was an outstanding opportunity to showcase the River at the heart of Medway and it was great that so many people came out to watch the displays and learn more about the River. This was only our second year and we hope to build on the accomplishments of the last two years and to continue to grow the event with your assistance.

Your support is greatly appreciated, without which we would not be able to showcase Medway to its full potential.

Thank you for all you have done to help ensure people Enjoy Medway.

With best wishes

COUNCILLOR HOWARD DOE
Portfolio Holder for
Housing and Community Services

COUNCILLOR KELLY TOLHURST
Portfolio Holder for
Educational Improvement

Events report

For many Members, the Associations' happenings on the water are the highlights of their boating year. It is the ability to combine use of our precious vessels, the joy of boating and the social interaction that make these events so anticipated. I hope the judgement of those who supported the 2013 events is that this year was no exception.

For the 2013 Commemorative Cruise at the end of May the Association made a somewhat overdue visit to Ipswich. Indeed it has been some six years since we last visited this fine city on the River Orwell. In all, 17 Little Ships attended; Mary Scott, Reygate II, Wanda, Elvin, Tom Tit, L'Orage, Hilfranor, RIIS I, Maid Marion, MTB 102, Ferry Nymph, Papillon, Elvin, Janthea, Endeavour, Trimillia and Firefly. The weather, silt and mechanical problems conspired against a number of other vessels making the trip.

Past journeys to Ipswich have included a rendezvous of Little Ships at West Mersea. A race meeting scheduled for the Commemorative Cruise weekend obliged a change in plan and Brightlingsea became the stop on the way to Ipswich. Brightlingsea Harbour and the Colne Yacht Club made us most welcome. An early departure on Saturday enabled the Vice Commodore to give a practical demonstration to the fleet of the channel shoals. Perhaps anticipating further problems ahead, as we approached Harwich the silhouette of the Harwich lifeboat gradually grew larger. Accompanied by the Harwich inshore lifeboat the Little Ships were requested to 'congregate' for a photo shoot.

On the radio instruction 'Little Ships congregate', a formation rarely previously seen on the water was

enacted with precision and aplomb! Moments later MTB 102 arrived and the Harwich lifeboat broke



off to return to station. Led by the inshore lifeboat the Little Ships arrived at Ipswich inner harbour to be met by Bernard Sharp, Dunkirk Veteran who celebrated his 21st birthday on the beaches in May 1940, and the standards of the Royal British Legion.



The Commemorative weekend was judged a great success. The Mayor of Ipswich, Councillor Hamil Clarke MBE led a civic reception for the skippers and crew. On Sunday morning a very well supported service was held at the marina adjacent to the Little Ships. Led by ADLS Hon. Chaplin Rev Gordon Warren; civic leaders, cadet organisations and veterans' organisation the sacrifices at Dunkirk 73 years previously. Jonathan Hunt, skipper of DLS Ferry Nymph worked tirelessly to ensure the local community was fully involved and we acknowledge his efforts with grateful thanks.

The Commemorative Cruise dinner was held at the Novotel with Bernard Sharp and Councillor Hamil Clarke as guests of honour. On the return journey Elvin came to the aid of Reygate II and earned a S.O.D. award. Well done Hywel and Jane. The next event on the water was the Medway River Festival on July 6th which is reported separately.

The weekend of July 20/21 saw the following Little Ships gather at Henley on Thames for the 35th Traditional Boat Rally: Hilfronor, Chumley, Gay Venture, Tom Tit, Nyula, Janthea, MB278, Aureol, L'Orage, Devon Belle, Gentle Ladye, Wanda, Lady Gay and Papillon. The weather brightened as the weekend progressed allowing both the Association sail pasts to be enjoyed by the many spectators. There is no denying that our Little Ships when sailing 'dressed overall' do make a particularly stirring sight (yes, we do know that sailing dressed overall is not really the done-thing but the Trad Rally is our one exception). Of course it is hard from the front of the sail past to know how things are looking as a whole. The feedback from our Saturday sail past indicated we needed to hone our spacing. This we did and by all accounts our Sunday sail past was spot on. This fine event finished with a bankside gathering held in and with true spirit of Dunkirk. .

The weekend of September 7/8 saw over 20 Little Ships

converging on Thames Motor Yacht Club (TMYC) at Hampton Court for the Annual Veterans Cruise. The Veterans Cruise was started over 30 years ago by the late Sandy Evans of Naiad Errant as a single day event to reunite Dunkirk Veterans with the Little Ships. Traditionally, Veterans boarded the Little Ships at Kingston on Thames and travelled up river to Weybridge Mariners Club (WMC) for lunch. Two years ago the then Commodore of Thames Motor Yacht Club, Andrew Bernstein, offered the hospitality of TMYC to the Association as a base for the Veterans Cruise and rather rapidly a new tradition was established with the event now spreading over the complete weekend. Both TMYC and WMC offer legendary hospitality to the Veterans and crews of the Little Ships and this event was no exception. By Saturday morning over 20 Little Ships had arrived and made a grand sight when viewed from Hampton Court Bridge, namely: Aureol, Chumley, Elvin, Tom Tit, Hilfronor, L'Orage, Nyula, Riis I, Wanda, White Marlin, MB 278, Gay Venture, Janthea, Lady Gay, Gentle Ladye, Mada, Margo II, Papillon, Thamesia, New Britannic and Wairakei II. For White Marlin this was the first official event following her extensive restoration. The commitment to attend this event from skippers and crew attests to the importance which the Association places on its relationships with the various Veterans organisations.



On Saturday Veterans from the South Atlantic Medal Association, the War Widows Association, BLESMA, Korean War Veterans, Normandy Veterans and Veterans of Bomber Command were entertained aboard the Little Ships for a trip down river to Eel Pie Island through Teddington Lock. After the river journey crews joined the Veterans for a fish and chip supper organised by TMYC. The Association was privileged to once again have support during the weekend from Royal Naval personnel from Victory Squadron, HMS Collingwood. The young men and women attached to the Little Ships for the weekend were not only a credit to the Senior Service but provided sterling practical assistance during the weekend.

Entertainment was provided on Saturday evening by the Royal Navy Volunteer Band led by C Sgt. Adrian Breen RN. As the light faded the Band led the Sunset Ceremony as ensigns were lowered. A fitting finale to a wonderful day.

Sunday dawned bright and clear and right on cue the Veterans started arriving an hour before schedule! No sooner had we got them 'formed up' (probably a slight exaggeration) than our Honorary Admiral, HRH Prince Michael of Kent arrived in the splendid Vauxhall 30/98 kindly supplied by the Vauxhall Museum, Luton. What a grand car. It is definitely on my 'if I win the lottery' list! After meeting the Veterans and other dignitaries Prince Michael boarded Wairakei II and the Veterans were helped to their assigned vessels by the enthusiastic RN Ratings from Victory Squadron. The weather stayed fine for the

trip up river to Weybridge Mariners Club, but broke in spectacular fashion as the lead Little Ships moored at the WMC pontoon. A squall hit with perfect timing and passed by just as the last Veterans were safely inside the clubhouse! After the traditional sing-along, Veterans were ferried to the waiting transport to take them back to TMYC. As before a wonderful array of classic cars had been arranged and generously supplied by willing owners. Prince Michael was returned to Kensington Place in something slightly less salubrious.

As a part of the Mayor's Thames Festival, Little Ships were invited to attend a gathering of classic and traditional vessels in St Katherine Dock over the weekend of September 14/15. Little Ships in attendance included: Wanda, MTB 102, New Britannic, RIIS I, Janthea, Elvin, Chumley, Challenge, and Endeavour. As a part of the festivities a number of guided tours around the Little Ships were arranged for the general public and these



proved very popular. One of the benefits of arriving early at events such as this is the opportunity to engage with visitors during the quiet periods before the public arrive. Some visitors are better known than others, and the sound of an al fresco 'Maggie May' drifting across St Kat. docks was a rare privilege. Perhaps a busking session with Rod and Greg could be introduced at future events as a way of generating even more interest in the New Britannic and the Little Ships.

Ian Gilbert.

FITTING OUT SUPPER

100 members and their guests of the Association visited the Thames Motor Yacht Club in Hampton Court on 27th April for our Fitting Out Supper. Our Honorary Admiral, HRH Prince Michael of Kent attended.

We had an abundance of guests. Our main guest was Commodore Martin Atherton RN the Naval Regional Commander Eastern England. In addition we were delighted to have the editor of Classic Boat, Dan Houston and his wife Elizabeth who sat with the Dennett's' table. Keeping an eye on us was the commodore of the host club, Michael Chambers, his wife Gabrielle and his predecessor, Andrew Bernstein.

We are lucky in having the Reverend Gordon Warren to start off proceedings with a rhyming grace.

We continued a new tradition of toasting the Royal Family in the Navy way. The complex instructions were presented by Mick Gentry and most of us understood enough to get a glass without falling off our chairs.

Martin Atherton, having been introduced by Simon Palmer, made a fine speech, giving the toast to the Association.

The event was represented by 23 vessels:- *Amazone, Chumley, Elvin, Gay Venture, Hilfranor, Janthea, Lady Gay, L'Orage, MTB 102, MB278, Monarch, Maid Marion, Naid Errant, New Britannic, Nyula, Papillon, Riis1, Tahilla, Tarifa, Thamesia, Tom Tit, Wanda.*

COMMEMORATIVE CRUISE SUPPER

The Association headed for Ipswich this year, stopping off for an enjoyable supper at the yacht club.

On 26th May 89 members and guests attended the Novotel in Ipswich for an excellent supper. The mayor of Ipswich, Councillor Hamil Clarke and his partner Daisy Weekes were the principal guests. We were also joined by veteran Bernard Sharp and his supporter Councillor Robin Vickery, Elizabeth and Martin Combes. Hamil made an impromptu speech and was rewarded by a trip the next day on Janthea, from which he returned alive. The Commodore rounded off the evening with another tour de force of a speech.

It was good to see Peter Packard, former commodore and previous owner of Nyula with his partner

18 vessels were represented at the dinner:

Elvin, Endeavour, Firefly, Hilfranor, Janthea, Lady Gay, L'Orage, MTB102, Maid Marion, Nyula, Papillon, Ryegate 11, Riis 1, Sundowner, Tahilla, Trimilia, Tom Tit, Wanda.

LAYING UP SUPPER

A welcome return to the Leander Club at Henley on 9th November saw us celebrating our 46th laying up supper with excellent food and service. Rev. Gordon Warren, our Honorary Chaplain(elect) opened the official proceedings, for those that have not had the pleasure of hearing him say grace, here is a transcript from the laying up:

*As we remember Lord, the sacrifice of many,
and see in each Little Ship a record that any
would be proud. May we, as love is lavished on each hull,
this winter, keep in mind that peace is but a lull
and often needs to be defended by young lives
that bravely go where many fear to tread.
May our endeavours on these Little Ships this winter tide
give the hearts of next years passers-by a dash of pride
as they perceive the many we will host aboard,
who having served and given their all abroad,
have come back home as heroes damaged by the foe
a tale to tell, yet full of fun and hope and rarely low.
So Lord, we seek your blessing this night of dining
and give thanks that your lamp is ever shining
to light our way and give us safe course to steer
to heavens safe harbour with no tide to veer
our way, free mooring, no shoals and we give you thanks
that your son paid all the harbour dues; no need for banks.
So bless each crew, our committee and our merry quips
as we maintain each Little Ship and plan for next years trips.
Amen*

Mark Webb (Firefly) as the newest member acted as 'Mr Vice' and proposed the loyal toast, after which we were entertained by our principal guest Squadron Leader Duncan Mason RAF Commanding Officer, Battle of Britain Memorial Flight, who has, in his own words, 'the best job in the world'. Following the dinner Norman Cannell (Janthea) gave out his traditional awards; without going into the painful details, the Putty Knife was awarded to Hilfranor, the Tough Duck to Wanda, Communicator to Papillon, Loose Wheel to Hilfranor, Broken Mast to Elvin, and Baxters Bollard to Janthea. Spirit of Dunkirk (SOD) awards were given to Elvin and Wanda. We had 85 guests and the following boats represented:-
Amazone Bluebird of Chelsea Chumley Elvin Firefly Gay Venture Hilfranor Janthea Lady Isabelle Lady Gay L'Orage Mary Jane Mada Michael Stephens MTB102 MB278 Nyula Papillon Riis 1 Tahilla Tarifa Tom Tit Wanda



Thames Traditional Boat Rally

The ADLS turned out in their usual numbers to support this fabulous weekend, which has become a permanent fixture in the Events Diary. As Chairman of the TTBR organising committee I was delighted to book-in and welcome 14 Dunkirk Little Ships, their crews and guests to the Rally.

The participating vessels were *Aureol*, *Chumley*, *Devon Belle*, *Gay Venture*, *Gentle Ladye*, *Hilfranor*, *Janthea*, *L'Orage*, *Lady Gay*, *MB 278*, *Nyula*, *Papillon*, *Tom Tit* and *Wanda*.

Dennis Cox was again tasked with arranging the ADLS moorings which he did quietly and most efficiently. This year we (the TTBR) were required to add an extra constraint on him as we had to satisfy the Environment Agency's "Good Neighbour Code", which limited the encroachment of the first trot of boats to be downstream of a line set at 45° from the boundary with Phyllis Court (PC), so that the PC rowers could safely return to their pontoon.

On Saturday we had the usual contingents from the Henley and Wycombe British Legion Branches who formed a Guard of Honour at the Official Opening Ceremony by the Mayor of Henley, who then took the salute from the Veterans as they proudly marched past.

To mark the fact that there were 49 boats attending the Rally this year which took part in the Queen's Diamond Jubilee Parades in London and Henley in 2012, a Special Sail Past was arranged on Saturday and Sunday with the ADLS leading the processions. That meant a deviation from the normal routine for the ADLS fleet, as they didn't tie up on the booms, but sailed directly through the course enjoying the adulation of the watching crowds.

On a personal note I would like to see even more Little Ships attend the Trad Rally and hope that especially in 2015 (a Return Year), that can be achieved; we had 18 ADLS in 2010, so let's see if we can improve on that number. To whet the appetite of those members who have not been to the Rally before I have endeavoured to second guess and answer a few questions you may have before committing to come along to join in with the fun.

What's the purpose of the Rally?

The primary aim of the Rally is to encourage the restoration, maintenance and use of traditionally built craft, and the skills on which they depend. It is the largest event of its kind in Europe with a limit of 200 boats being set to ensure they will fit on the available bank space.

Who started it and why?

The rally was started in 1977 at Shepperton by the River Thames Society, in response to the threat posed to traditional boats and boatbuilding skills by fibreglass boats. It has been held every year here at Henley since 1978, with the exception of 2011 when the weather and river conditions forced its cancellation.

What is a Traditional Boat?

A boat built using traditional materials and methods. In essence this means wood, riveted (but not welded) iron or steel, canvas, leather (e.g. a coracle).

Has the Rally made any difference to the traditional boat scene over its 35 years?

We don't claim for a moment it's all down to us, but we can point to the fact that more old boats come out of "retirement" each year,

that new traditional boats are being commissioned, that we have introduced a large number of people to traditional boating, and that there is a core of Thames Boatbuilders who seem to be constantly busy building and repairing traditional boats.

Where do all the boats travel from to get to the Rally?

Some from the East Coast, some from the South Coast, the Broads, the Thames of course, the Wey, and assorted canals. Many of the smaller/lighter boats come by road – last year we had 11 skiffs visiting from Holland, and this year we had a skiff and a 32ft motor boat trailered over from Germany. We also frequently have boats arrive on a trailer from the Lake District, the Isle of Wight, and the South West. We also have regular visitors – without their boats – from New Zealand, Australia, USA and most of mainland Europe.

What other attractions are there apart from the boats?

There are a great deal of attractions for everyone, which include a sizeable Boat Jumble, a good number of Boat Builders, a varied selection of craft, jewellery, clothing and chandlery traders. There will be a Children's Entertainer, Jazz bands, a well-stocked Bar and Food Court, not forgetting the regular Saturday Night Band to help you dance the night away. AND much, much more; have a look at the website on www.tradboatrally.com for even more information.

Who does all the work to set the Rally up?

The Thames Traditional Boat Rally is organised by a group of individuals on a totally voluntary basis. The 'committee' now numbers just 6, we are all getting older and we need to bolster the number of active helpers to share the tasks both before and during the event. We are also keen to introduce new ideas and ways of doing things – that too needs new fresh minds.

It is not necessary to "be on the committee" (though we need new committee members too) but by providing a little time for a specific task the extra helpers will reduce the burden on the current few. If we can't raise enough volunteers we will have to pay to get it done, which will change the feel of the event and inevitably cost more.

I have had a few very welcome offers of help but there is still room for more fresh enthusiastic people to come forward. The committee will begin the work for the 2014 event in January, so if you think you may be able to help please contact me at

tradboatentries@hotmail.co.uk.

Tony Goodhead – ADLS Committee Member and TTBR Chairman



Archivist Report

Judging by the ever increasing number of enquires we receive, the interest in the Evacuation and the events of May and June 1940 is growing. The interest in researching family history means that most enquiries are from family members asking about veterans and boats that previous generations of their family had owned. We also had several interesting boat inquiries this year.

One was a boat called Makaira, a 47 foot Express Cruiser built by the British Powerboat Company in 1938. Her owner believed that she was commandeered during the War and was known as RFC 113. The Dunkirk historian John de Winser has RFC 113 listed as being commandeered for the Evacuation, and also taking part in Operation Aerial, having gone from Jersey to St Malo twice on 17th and 18th June. The problem was confirming that Makaira was RFC 113. I found a copy of 1952 Lloyds Register of Yachts that listed Makaira with her 'ex' name as RFC 113, and with that link we were happy that she is a Little Ship and she has become a member. Interestingly, RFC relates to the Royal Flying Corp, for which her first owner flew during the First World War.

Another was an enquiry about a vessel called Malahne, a 165 foot Motor Yacht built by Camper & Nicholsons in 1937 that is being refitted at the moment. Our archive has no record of Malahne at Dunkirk, but she was commandeered during the war and used by the Fleet Air Arm. The owner's representative had found a transcript of an interview in the Imperial War Museum given by a Naval rating. He says that he was on Malahne on 3rd June 1940 and she 'ushered the little boats back from Dunkirk'. One concern with this is that he said he was on Tommy Sopwith's yacht (his yacht was Philante). He also recalled a bad experience while going into Newhaven Harbour. Going into the harbour in front of Malahne was a Jersey potato boat which was mined and sunk. He remembers having to pick up the bodies. I recommended that they should contact the Fleet Air Arm Museum to find out about Malahne's service history, and also research the incident at Newhaven to verify the transcript and prove where Malahne was in May and June 1940.

Whilst looking into Malahne's history, I wondered if Philante was involved in the Evacuation, and I found she was listed as taking part in Operation Aerial; she evacuated the Governor of Jersey on 21st June 1940. Philante is now the Norwegian Royal Yacht Norge. She might mess up the mooring plan for a Dunkirk return, as she's 265 feet long and 1628 tons!

Finally there was an inquiry about the ex Trinity House vessel Bembridge, that was based in Cowes between 1938 and 1946. She was saved from the scrap yard in 2009 and is now in Szczecin, Poland where she has been restored. Her owners have six reports that she took part in the Evacuation, including from retired pilots. But there are no records in our archive of her taking part, and Trinity House's archive was lost during the war. I have asked for more information about the reports.

John Tough

Janthea and Wanda

Janthea and Wanda set out one day

To sail from London to home.

The river was rough, the sailing was tough

But thankfully the rain kept away

Janthea she coughed, both engines they stopped

She was no longer able to steer.

But Wanda was great, she pushed delicate

To moor us on Chiswick Pier

The rest of the day poor Patrick he lay

Face down on the engines to clean

Off came filters and pipes, and injectors, twice

Till the fuel bug was no longer seen

So both Captains and crew, their energies new

Supped royally, no more to do.

Down went the beer and up went the cheer

Oops, where shall we empty the loo?

Early next day we were again on our way

Now cold and lashing with rain.

With a dislike of the day some were heard to say

"We wish we had gone home by train!"

The moral to tell is your diesel may well

Be harbouring more than you fear.

Mark well our sad tale and all good will prevail

For trouble free cruising next year

Sandy Evans 1918 - 2013

Co-owner Naiad Errant, Committee Member 1984-2001, Instigator of the Veterans Cruise, Past News Letter Editor and ADLS representative in the early days of the Thames Traditional Boat Rally.

It is with sadness that we report Sandy's unexpected death. Having first met Sandy when he joined the ADLS in 1981 I should have had a clue as to his age but was still very surprised to see that he was nearly 96 when he died. Sandy was a great character in the tradition of the ADLS and many stories of his activities abound.

For me Sandy will always be remembered for his kindness in taking the trouble to telephone the lock keeper at Thames Lock on the river Wey to check if Ann and I had passed through on Elizabeth Green in 1985 bound for Dover. We hadn't...a brand new shaft coupling had broken and we were moored on the towpath trying to work out how to get it fixed and still make Dover for the return to Dunkirk. Sandy appeared after driving and walking to find out where we were (no mobile phones in those days) and to cut a very long story short, with his help (and car) a new coupling was located, machined to size, and fitted, all within 24 hours and we made Dover.

In my opinion a fine example of the Spirit of Dunkirk and Ann and I will miss him.

Alan Jackson (Commodore 2006-2008)

A Swiss Diary

A. Egger was a young Swiss man living in Brussels when the Germans invaded Belgium. As a Swiss national, he was a neutral, and theoretically free from harm. Not wishing to get caught up in the conflict however, he decides to return to his parents in Switzerland. Finding the trains disrupted, he leaves on a bicycle, only to be arrested by the Belgian authorities near the French border as a suspected Nazi parachutist. In spite of his Swiss passport and other documentation, he is unable to persuade them of his innocence, and in the chaos of the time is swept up with other 'suspects', and marched off by foot towards Paris. We pick up his story on May 29th:-

May 29th

Yesterday we found accommodation in a little village, the name of which has momentarily slipped my mind. Vehicle upon vehicle, then constant artillery fire rattles past our window throughout the night.

On our march today we occasionally see cars that had driven off the road and had ended up in the water. Others are stuck in mud and have had to be abandoned. The streets are full of endless convoys of military vehicles. All are moving in haste towards the sea and are blocking each other's passage. There is no moving forward or backward any more; each and every one will fall into the hands of the Germans as welcome booty.

The greatest turmoil exists in Breydune. Here the streets are congested with military trucks and soldiers and the confusion in the little town on the coast is boundless. The Moroccans and Algerians do not miss their chance to go to find food and drink. After they had brutally beaten us along the way, they now hand us a few of their extra containers of canned food. But, alas! The lieutenant sees the merciful deed and scolds his black soldiers in the most excessive manner. Swearing rudely he then demands everything back. In his opinion it is better to let this food go to the enemy than to give it to us. We who are about to succumb to hunger are now forced to find morsels of food on the road! Pieces of biscuits and anything else that can be found in the dirt may not be very enticing, but nevertheless are most welcome and are shared among us in the spirit of camaraderie. Once fortune provides me with a small piece of chocolate. What would it have given for a whole bar!

Throughout the afternoon we lay in the sun in a potato field. Not until early evening do we continue in the direction of the sea. As we near the coast, a wonderfully sublime view opens before our eyes. The fiery-red sun is just about to dip into

the sea. In that, a fairy-like light is cast upon the misery of the thousands and thousands of people awaiting evacuation, and the ships floating in the water. For a moment I stand there lost in thought, forgetting all the wretchedness in this world. Then, suddenly an enemy squadron appears and flies a wide loop over the canal, returning soon after to begin its work of destruction. One plane after another dives with frightening speed toward the ships, drops three bombs on the intended target and climbs back into the sky just as rapidly. Antiaircraft guns incessantly spit out showers of bullets toward the attackers without shooting down a single plane. The Germans, on the contrary, aim their projectiles more precisely. Two ships, hit directly, burst into bright flames. Others suffer heavy damage from bombs exploding in the waters nearby. They send out SOS calls and slowly begin to sink. Fortunately the pilots choose not to aim for the tens of thousands of soldiers positioned on the quay. A single bomb could have taken hundreds of lives.

The ship intended for us must have become a casualty of the air raid. Again we march on. The way leads along the beach in the direction of Dunkerque. A strip of bright red along the horizon tells us what the 'situation is like in the brightly burning town. From time to time the air rumbles and shakes from the detonations of the exploding reservoirs on the docks. For God's sake, what are we doing in this Gomorrah? Walking on in the sand is very wearisome; but Dunkerque can only be reached in this way, because the street on the quay is reserved for the military. An older lady who, like all other women had been traveling up to Breydune by car, is not strong enough for the strenuous walk. We carry her with much effort to Dunkerque and only with the greatest difficulty can we carry the woman through the bomb-damaged, ripped-open streets that are littered with mangled telephone lines. She no longer wishes to be a burden to us and decides to stay behind. Her child does not have the heart to leave the mother: the girl stays with her. Two shots ring out: With the loyalty of a child, the daughter follows the mother to the grave.

In Dunkerque we are led to the quay. We wait three full hours in the cold night. We are at the limits of our strength. Exhausted, we lay down on the ground and are soon sleeping, oblivious of the German projectiles constantly hissing above our heads.

May 30th

At 5 o'clock in the morning the Commander leads us onto an old ship moored on tire docks. The "St. Octave" is swarming with refugees and German war prisoners. They are all accommodated here because there is not a house

undamaged in the destroyed town that could serve this purpose. We are all glad when we are turned over to the "Garde Mobile,, and" thank God that we have escaped with out lives from the charge of the "black gang". Seventeen people: twelve men and five women, have been killed by the ruthless Commander.

June 1st

The treatment by the "Garde Mobile" is much more humane and the food on the ship is better and sufficient. But even here we are suffering some deprivation. We all are terribly thirsty. The town's water pipes were destroyed during the bombardment and al1 that 1s left is the water in the ship's reservoir. But the tank is so small that we each are given not more than a quarter of a litre of the precious liquid each day, an amount that is not sufficient for those who had walked in the burning hot sun for days. The heat in the ship's hold makes us perspire all over. Peop1e are parched with thirst. Finally the Commander of the "Garde Mobile" shows mercy. A barrel of wine is brought in from the town and thus our fate is somewhat alleviated.

Since we have taken up quarters in the ship's hull. Dunkerque has been bombed repeatedly each day and is under nearly constant artillery fire. Firing is especially dense at night. Bullet after bullet hits the harbor facilities now in front of the ship and then behind. Sssss...-boom, ssss....boom... rings incessantly, and splinters and rocks hail onto the "St. Octave." Last night, close to midnight, a bullet went through the ship's hull and exploded in the German war prisoners' room. Horrible screams and calls for help rang throughout the night -Twenty casualties and over sixty critically wounded were to be deplored. Had the projectile pierced the iron wall 20 metres further towards the back of the ship, this diary would probably have remained unwritten.

June 2nd

Yesterday at dusk about two hundred people were taken from the "St. Octave" and shipped to an unknown destination. We, the remaining two hundred, will be embarked today as well. It is probable that the Allies are unable to hold Dunkerque,' the town will be taken soon.

June 3rd

About 8 pm last night we also left the "St. Octave." The town is a desolate sight. Most of the houses are completely destroyed; flames are still licking in others, crackling and looking for more fuel. Dead soldiers, horses and overturned ambulances lie on the quay in great disorder. What a scene of

horror! Black clouds of smoke follow our ships for a long time as if wanting to give us a funeral procession. The thunder from the roaring canons is becoming softer and softer. We have escaped the greatest danger, and relieved, we can once again draw a deep breath.

If we had been in doubt about our journey's destination in the beginning, we soon notice that the ship's course is set for England. The passage takes place without further noteworthy events. Two times we hear enemy aircraft, but the pilots cannot detect us in the dark and the shipmen are careful not to give away our position with anti-aircraft fire or other imprudent measures. Our bodies shivering with cold, we reach Dover in the morning

First we are driven to the Town Hall where we are welcomed in a friendly manner with "Tea and Sandwiches." Then, for the first time since my arrest, I am brought before a fact-finding committee. It is here that we discover that the Commander of the colonial troops has destroyed all our documents and - which is easily guessed - has kept our money. An officer who does very little honor to his country!

Filled with confidence in England I looked to the future. My identity was determined without objection within 14 days. The Swiss Embassy and an influential Englishman provided guarantee. Nonetheless, I remained eight full weeks in prison. How I, a free Swiss man, suffered emotionally during that time, I must conceal from the reader. It cannot be described.

A. Egger

"For the Fallen"

They went with songs to the battle, they were young.
Straight of limb, true of eyes, steady and aglow.
They were staunch to the end against odds uncounted,
They fell with their faces to the foe.

They shall grow not old, as we that are left grow old:
Age shall not weary them, nor the years condemn.
At the going down of the sun and in the morning,
We will remember them.

They mingle not with their laughing comrades again;
They sit no more at familiar tables of home;
They have no lot in our labour of the day-time;
They sleep beyond England's foam

Laurence Binyon
first published in *The Times* in September 1914.

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