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Mersey Log

*Journal of the Merseyside Branch
World Ship Society*

The Merseyside Branch of the World Ship Society meets on the second Tuesday of each month – January excepted- at the Liverpool Seafarers' Centre, 20 Crosby Road South, Waterloo, L22 1RQ



STENA NORDICA arriving at Cammell Laird 10th December 2025 (Editor)

Mersey Log

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Hon. Treasurer: John Williams

Committee Members: Stan McFerran, Peter Purland, Simon Smith

Editorial

I am sure that like myself most readers will be looking forward to spring and the promise of better weather. Winter 2025/2026 has seen no shortage of bad weather but the maritime world carries on moving cargo and passengers thanks to the resilience of seafarers, pilots, tug crews and many others. Despite the many storms the River Mersey has remained busy throughout the winter period.

Branch News

December 2025

Our December Presentation was given by our own Chairman, John Luxton, whose title was Irish and Celtic Sea Shipping - the Early Digital Era. John, in fact, began with the ports of Devon and Cornwall before crossing over to Ireland and investigating the ports of Cobh and Cork. The early digital era, in this context, was from about twenty years ago and we were treated to superb shots of all types of vessels together with the port infrastructures of the time all accompanied by a knowledgeable and entertaining commentary. The meeting was very well attended.

February 2026

On Tuesday, February 10, Iain Quinn delivered his 20th presentation to the Merseyside Branch with his first digital talk, "Come Clyde Cruising – The Scottish Transport Group Years 1965-1974." As always, his session featured outstanding photographs capturing a bygone era and showcased numerous ships that sailed the Clyde during this time, highlighting the shift from traditional to modern ro/ro vessels.

Iain's annual visit has become a staple in the branch's programme and often draws extra attendees. To commemorate Iain's 20th appearance, Chairman John Luxton presented him with a specially inscribed plaque on behalf of the members and committee. Iain will return in 2027 with his next talk "My Favourite Steamers and Why".



IAN QUINN with JOHN LUXTON, Liverpool Seafarers Centre 10th Feb 2026

Merseyside Maritime News

NEW MERSEY FERRY ON THE RIVER FOR THE FIRST TIME

After months of construction at Cammell Laird, the new £26m Mersey Ferry – *Royal Daffodil* – takes to the river for the first time as Metro Mayor Steve Rotheram reveals which of the two existing ferries is for the chop.



New £26m Mersey Ferry *Royal Daffodil* on the river for the first time. Picture by Tony McDonough

Metro Mayor Steve Rotheram watched the new £26m Mersey Ferry – *Royal Daffodil* – take to the river for the first time on Thursday morning.

Royal Daffodil has been under construction at the Cammell Laird shipyard in Birkenhead since January, the first new ferry built for more than 60 years. On

Thursday morning in front of the Mayor and the media, the vessel was floated on the Mersey for the first time.

Her engines have not yet been installed so tug vessels pulled the boat on a short journey along the river and into Cammell Laird's wet basin where workers will finish the build in time for her to come into service in summer 2026.

In an interview with LBN, Mr Rotheram spoke of his pride at seeing Royal Daffodil on the Mersey for the first time. The vessel is being funded by the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority.

He said: "It is an historic day. We have had a crossing on the Mersey for around 800 years and so this is a modern version of the traditional ferry and I think people will be impressed when they get on it.

"*Royal Daffodil* is now a symbol of our pride, progress and the world-class skills of our local workforce. Built right here in Liverpool city region, she's cleaner, greener, and ready to carry this proud tradition into the future for many years to come."

And Mr Rotheram also revealed for the first time which of the two existing 60-year-old vessels – *Royal Iris* and *Snowdrop* – would be taken out of the service when *Royal Daffodil* is introduced into service next year. It is *Royal Iris* that is for the chop.

"So the Dazzle Ferry (*Snowdrop*) will be staying and what we are going to do is take some of the parts from Royal Iris to use in *Snowdrop*. We will look to see if we can do similar to what has been done with the original *Daffodil* – maybe on the Wirral side of the river."

He was referring to the previous *Royal Daffodil* which has been converted into [a multi-million pound bar and restaurant attraction in Canning Dock](#), next to Royal Albert Dock, by entrepreneurs Philip Olivier and Joshua Boyd.

When commissioning the vessel the Combined Authority decided against an all-electric ferry, a decision likely based on higher cost of construction and the extra expense of having to install charging infrastructure on the Mersey.

Although Royal Daffodil will initially burn diesel it is being future-proofed so it can be converted to run entirely on electric at a later date.

[Cammell Laird](#), which has previously built 15 Mersey Ferries dating back to 1836, is installing a diesel-electric hybrid-ready engine, designed to be adaptable for future conversion to full electric propulsion.

Royal Daffodil will also be using the Azipod propeller system. This is a gearless, steerable propulsion unit where an electric motor is housed in a pod submerged outside the ship's hull. It enhances fuel efficiency by improving maneuverability and reducing energy waste.

In a carefully managed 24-hour operation, the vessel was moved to the river's edge to allow the incoming tide to slowly lift her clear and float for the very first time. Engineers will carry out further work ahead of full sea trials early next year.

David McGinley, chief executive of the APCL Group, parent company of Cammell Laird, added: "The basin test is a vital stage in the shipbuilding process.

"It's the first time a new vessel meets the water, and it allows us to confirm that everything performs as expected before she goes to sea. Seeing the *Royal Daffodil* afloat for the first time is a huge achievement for everyone involved in her construction."

(Liverpool Business News, 06 November 2025)

ISLE OF MAN STEAM PACKET NEWS

In November the Liverpool-based crane barge *LARA 1* was observed repositioning a berthing dolphin at the Waterloo terminal to make it compatible with the *MANXMAN*.



LARA 1 at the Isle Of Man Terminal 26th November 2025 (John Luxton)

Liverpool Business News reported that a replacement for the fast ferry *MANANNAN* is expected to enter service by 2030 and will cost around £120 million. Built by Incat at Hobart in 1998 the ninety six metre *MANANNAN* was delivered to the Steam Packet in 2009.



MANANNAN at Liverpool 30th July 2011 (Editor)

The new craft that will not be a like for like replacement is expected to provide greater reliability especially for winter sailings and will be able to berth at the Liverpool terminal.

MYRENA ANNIVERSARY

On New Year's Day 1976 the Shell tanker *MYRINA* was discharging a cargo of crude oil at Tranmere when she was hit by a storm with winds up to one hundred knots. Her mooring lines and oil hoses broke leaving the vessel adrift. Attempts to hold her in to the wind failed and she was blown up river grounding at the south end of Pluckington Bank on a falling tide. Aided by thirteen tugs she was refloated the following day. *MYRINA* was ordered by Sigval Bergesen in 1965 but following the death of Mr Bergesen was delivered to Deutsche Shell Tanker GmbH by Harland & Wolff in April 1968. With gross and deadweight tonnages of 95,836 and 193,048 respectively and a length of 1,050 feet she was the first supertanker built by a UK yard. The ship remained in service for a further five years until she was delivered to Korean shipbreakers in August 1981.



Two later tankers operated by Shell have taken the name *MYRINA*. A VLCC built in Korea in 1995 was broken up in India in 2017. A large LNG carrier built by Daewoo in 2018 remains in service today.

CAMMELL LAIRD WINTER DRY-DOCKINGS

The dry docks at Birkenhead have seen another busy winter season for Cammell Laird. Amongst the vessels that have received attention are the three E-Flexer ferries *STENA EDDA*, *STENA EMBLA* and *STENA ESTRID* with the latter arriving on January 9th following a berthing incident at Holyhead two days earlier.



STENA ESTRID arriving at Cammell Laird 9th January 2026 (John Luxton)

Other Stena vessels worked on were the *STENA HIBERNIA*, *STENA NORDICA*, *STENA SCOTIA* and *STENA SUPERFAST VII*.

Other ferries included Calmac's *FINNLAGGEN* and *GLEN SANNOX*, Northlink's *HAMNAVOE* and Isle Of Man Steam Packet's *BEN-MY-CHREE* and *MANANNAN*.



HAMNAVOE arriving at Cammell Laird from Stromness 6th January 2026 (Editor)

TRANMERE OIL TERMINAL IN 2025

In 2025 Tranmere Oil Terminal received one hundred and thirteen calls by large tankers with a total deadweight of 12.4 million tons. Eighty seven of the arrivals were at the north jetty with imported crude oil. Vessels calling at the south jetty brought gas to liquid (GTL) and diesel products. Vessel size varied from the one VLCC (EAGLE VENICE, 154163 grt) to the MR2 KRITI at just under twenty nine thousand gross tons.

The twenty two calls made by shuttle tankers brought crude oil from various floating production, storage and offloading (FPSO) units and the Norwegian port of Sture. Prominent amongst the shuttle tankers were those from the fleet of Knutsen NYK Offshore Tankers.



INGRID KNUTSEN inbound for Tranmere 11th October 2025 (Editor)

The most popular loading ports for crude oil were Corpus Christi, Houston and Arzew in Algeria. Cargoes were also received from Canada, Libya and just one appeared to come from the Russian port of Novorossiysk aboard the Greek Aframax *MINERVA ASTRA*.

The product tankers calling at the south jetty came from many different ports including a number from the Nigerian terminal at Escravos.

Over half of the visiting vessels were built in South Korea. The average age of the ships was approximately eleven years. The most frequent caller in 2025 was Lundqvist's Aframax *PENELOP* with five visits.

MERSEY TUG NEWS

The latest arrival for Boluda's Mersey fleet is the rotor tug *VB BAYDAN*. She was delivered to Kotug International BV as *RT EDUARD* in 2010 by Niigata Shipbuilding & Repair. Her measurements are a gross tonnage of 463 tons, a length of 32 metres and she provides a bollard pull of up to 80 tonnes. Power is provided by three Caterpillar engines developing 7,260 BHP.



VB BAYDAN assisting MSC DORINE V 14th February 2026 (Editor)

The former Liverpool-based tug *VB ZEEBRUGGE* has been demolished at the Galloo yard in Ghent.

Bromborough-based Carmet have acquired a Damen Shoalbuster tug from Australian owners and have named her *CT PRENTON*. She called at Birkenhead in October 2025 and took the GREEN CONSTRUCTOR to Holyhead followed by the SKYLIFT 2 for Rotterdam,

FROM TWENTY FIVE YEARS AGO



MULTI TRADER on Vittoria Wharf 9th February 2001 (Editor)

The general cargo *MULTI TRADER* was built by Sunderland Shipbuilders and delivered to Bank Line as *TENCHBANK*. Her last owners were Cyprus Sea Lines and she was delivered to Indian shipbreakers in October 2008. By 1997 she had left the Bank Line fleet and subsequently carried the names *EASTMAN*, *TAMATHAI*, *CLINTON K*, *JOSEMARIA ESCRIVA* and *M. P. TRADER*.