

Black Jack

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WORLD SHIP SOCIETY
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Virgin Cruises' **Scarlet Lady** in Portsmouth Harbour outward bound on 21st June..

photo Capt Peter Anthony

Black Jack – Autumn 2021 No.200

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***Black Jack is the quarterly magazine of the
Southampton Branch of the World Ship Society.***

Branch Meetings

Venue:

St James Road Methodist Church

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Shirley

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All meetings commence at 19.30 and the meeting room is to be vacated by 21.30. Meetings are on the second Tuesday of each month.

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2021 Branch Meeting Programme

September 14th ***Southampton Docks*** Colin Drayson

October 12th ***Personal Voyages*** Andy Skarskein

November 9th ***AGM and photo competition***

December 14th ***Around Italy*** David Oldham

IMPORTANT !

Please note that as announced in the recent email our branch meetings will resume on 14th September. We will be in our new venue Room 7. Enter the church building from the car park at the back – our room is up the stairs, then turn right and Room 7 is at the end of the corridor.

Black Jack 200

While not making a special issue of this being the 200th edition of Black Jack it is perhaps appropriate that we are featuring the first instalment of a three-part article on Williams Shipping one of oldest owners of small coastal vessels based in Southampton.

All contributions to *BJ*, by post, email, memory stick or CD are most welcome. Any article with a connection to The Solent area would be much appreciated. The Editor could reproduce magazine or newspaper articles but preference is given to articles ‘by the branch – for the branch’.

Would members please ensure that any changes to their postal and/or email addresses are notified to the Branch as soon as possible.

Andrew's Note Book

Some new or infrequent callers to Southampton Docks by Andrew McAlpine

Welcome to the latest notebook from the port of Southampton, here are some updates on the comings and goings and other news from around the port.

The port has been very busy over the summer months. The 2021 cruise season has kicked off with a number of cruise ships based in Southampton for their UK seacations. As I write, **Disney Magic** is about to embark on her last sailing from Southampton while 2019 built **Sky Princess** embarks on the first of her UK seacations.



Left: **Sky Princess** seen sailing 25th August.

The container terminal has continued to be busy with vessel a number of different visitors calling due to additional sailings and ships switching service. On 9th June, the Hapag-Lloyd operated **Al Safat** suffered engine trouble and was moved from SCT5 to the adjacent 109 berth (photo right) while repairs were made.



On 15th July, the interesting general NYK owned general cargo vessel **Iki** visited having arrived from La Coruna. (photo left) Built in 2005 she has a ramp at the stern for ro-ro cargo.

There have been regular calls to the scrap/bulk berths. On 16th June the 2002 built bulk carrier **Agios Porfyrios** arrived from Garrucha. (photo below left)



Agios Porfyrios arriving assisted by the tug **Wyeforce**



The 2006-built **Arklow Faith** alongside 12th August loading scrap for Bilbao

until next time stay safe and happy ship spotting
Andrew

all photos by Andrew McAlpine

With a history traced back to the early 1890's, the Company is probably the oldest established owner of small coastal vessels based in Southampton, as well as being the largest operator of such vessels in the Port.

The founder, George Williams was born in 1862, one of eight children brought up at Rollestone Farm at Fawley. He went to sea at a young age, initially on coastal vessels, before working up to windjammers. In 1883, he married local girl Sarah Shelley and by 1891, now with two daughters, he came ashore from his final ship **Athenian** of Union Steamship Company.

By 1892, the family had moved into a house in Hythe Shipyard, where George now worked, the shipyard being owned by family friend John West. It was here that George planned to set up his own business, with some initial financial support from John West.



His first vessel was a small rowed open pinnace being sold by the Royal Navy, which was brought to Hythe on the banks of Southampton Water and converted into a sailing barge able to carry up to twenty tons of cargo. The barge, now named "**Spec**" reflecting this speculative venture, was moved to Ashlett Creek. It was not long before he was successful in acquiring his first cargo, collecting a consignment from the Isle of Wight for delivery to Southampton. Once his first voyage was completed, he soon gained a reputation for delivering the reliable service which has become the cornerstone of Williams Shipping's development.

In 1901, John West sold the Hythe Shipyard, so George and his family moved to Newlands at Stonehills. In 1905, his first son, James (Jim) left school and joined **Spec** as Mate. After six years, Jim joined the yacht **Gueta**, crewing of the owners racing yacht at regattas around the UK, before in 1912 joining the Cape mail boat **Saxon** for two round voyages. On his return, George suggested that James buy the Thames barge **Mary Emily**, then laid-up at Hythe Shipyard.

With the onset of the World War, Jim laid-up the **Mary Emily** and in 1915 joined the **Archimedes** (Lamport & Holt) sailing for the front with 800 horses, guns and equipment. On his return, with both vessels sold, George and James used the proceeds to acquire the elderly ketch **Ellen**, then the **Nancy Bell**, which a few years later was refitted with an engine. Work now included transporting materials for the new Atlantic, Gulf and West Indies (AGWI) oil refinery, which opened in 1921 to handle the increasing number of tankers arriving with crude oil from the Middle East.

George's son Jim took over the reins eventually and at the start of the 1930's was trading as James Williams of Fernlea, Fawley, the style being changed about 1938 to James Williams & Son, then on 27 October 1942 to Williams Shipping Co. (Fawley) Ltd. In April 1945, the Company took a tenancy of two areas on Town Quay from Southampton Harbour Board for storage and an office, adding further areas in January 1948 and 1950, then part of J warehouse in 1952 and it was here that Jim and his son Ray, the third generation, was actively involved in expanding the business.

Early attempts at land transport were unsuccessful. In 1904, a horse and cart were acquired for deliveries from Ashlett, but the horse died. In 1933, a 2-ton Ford was purchased to deliver coal from Ashlett to Beaulieu, Exbury and Calshot, but, being unprofitable, this ceased in 1934. However, in 1956, an agreement with Esso to hold and deliver stores to ships at Fawley and Milford Haven resulted in the start of the land-transport business that is now so successful. In October 1956, the Company moved to larger offices in Clyde Building on Town Quay, which they later purchased.

After an approach by Esso in 1967, Southern Tanker & Bunkering Company was set up as a joint venture with Husbards Shipyard to operate local bunkering and later coastal fuel deliveries. In 1975, the bunkering business was sold to Bowker & King and Southern Tankers was formed and expanded to continue the coastal deliveries, until sold to Greek owners in 1977.

From 15th September 1982, the Company became known as Williams Shipping Group Ltd, changing to Williams Shipping Holdings Ltd from 9th October 2000. The marine sector of the Company has been operated by under the name Williams Shipping Marine Ltd since December 1988, although the name Midspec Ltd was also initially used for a few months.

The Company continued to grow and expanded its operations into road transport, small tankers and bunkering as well as the services which founder George had initiated. In 1968 Ray's son Eric, joined the family firm with younger son Colin joining his brother eight years later. By 1971, the transport-side required more warehousing and the former Nurdin & Peacock premises were acquired in Shirley, the non-marine activities producing greater income from 1974. The

expansion and diversification continued with a large open-storage site at Nursling, then in 1976 Mayflower Oilfield Services Ltd was established, as a joint venture with Red Funnel, to provide an offshore drilling support base at Town Quay for exploration in the English Channel and Approaches, the Company taking full control in 1988. In 1987, the former Coca-Cola at Millbrook was acquired to replace the Hollybrook warehouse. After more than 40 years at Town Quay, in 1986 due to the impending redevelopment, the marine services were relocated to a new base in the Empress Dock. The 1989 merged with Inshore Ship Management to start the expansion of the flat-top deck cargo pontoon fleet. Today the Company is still operated by five family members. Eric (Chairman) working with his brother Colin, and two sons Philip and Jonathan. Colin's son Chris is the most recent member of the Williams family to join the team. Now with a large workforce, many of whom are long term employees, the Company's ethos remains the same as it did when George made that very first voyage in his little barge "**Spec**".

PART ONE - CURRENT FLEET

Tugs

Wilanne (2004-present) StanTug 1605 type ordered April 2004 and delivered 10th May 2004 by Damen, Gorinchem, Netherlands (yn.503912 - 2003 stock hull yn.1026 from Galati, Romania); 83 gross tons 16.89m loa x 5.29m with 2.25m draft; twin screw with two Caterpillar diesels (960 bhp) 10 kts; 12.8 tons bollard pull. (o.n.908743, IMO 9320221) *(photo right)*

Lilah (2013-present) built 1974 by Richard Dunston, Thorne (yn. T1306) as RMAS Triton Class Tractor Tug **Lilah A174**, sold out 2002, Milford Haven 2002-13; 89 gross, 16.0m loa x 5.0m with 2.7m draft; single screw Voith Schneider with Lister Blackstone diesel (330 bhp) 8 kts; 3 tons bollard pull; 2013 acquired. *(photo below right)*




Willpower (2014-present) StanTug 2207 type built 2000 by Damen Shipyards, Gorinchem as **Sidi Mousa** (Casablanca, Morocco owner); 140 grt 22.5m loa x 7.25m with 2.95m draft; twin screw with two Caterpillar diesels (2000 bhp), 12 kts; 28.4 tons bollard pull; April 2014 acquired and renamed. (IMO 9220691) *(photo above left)*




Fast Launches and Rigid Inflatable Boats (RIBs)

Wilventure II (2004-present) Watercraft 45' MkII design, built 1988 by Fairey Marinteknik (UK) Ltd, Cowes as MOD Police **Dignity** 8556; 12.9m loa x 4.26m with 1.14m draft; twin screw with two Scania diesels (704 hp), 22 knots max. 12 passengers. 2004 acquired, rebuilt and re-engined by Holyhead Marine Services. *(photo right in new colours by Nigel Robinson)* (NB: purchase included a second ex-MOD Police sister vessel - **Tactful** - that was immediately resold – see *Part Two*)



Willnip	(2017-present) 5.5m Avon Searider RIB with 75hp engine; 2017 acquired from Beaulieu & Bucklers Hard Marine.	
Willfetch	(2018-present) built 1985 by Lochin Marine, Rye as Ravensbourne II for Port of London Authority; 11.74m loa x 3.96m; twin screw with two Yanmar diesels (740 hp) 22 kts; 2018 acquired and renamed. <i>(photo right)</i>	
Wilzip (ii)	(2019-present) Rigid inflatable boat built by Island Ribs, Cowes; 7.5m with 275hp diesel.	
Willfreedom	(2021-present) built 2021 by Safehaven Marine, Ireland 14.9m loa x 4.4m; twin screw with two Scania diesels (1000 bhp), 24 knots max. 10 passengers.	
Tiger Shark	(2021-present) 8m RIB 2003 built by Scorpion Ribs, Lymington for Oil Spill Response; 250hp diesel; 2021 acquired.	

Multicat Workboat/tugs

Wilcat (ii)	(1994-present) Road Transportable Multicat; built 1986 by Bailey & Boynton Marine, Hull as Topcat ; 14.0m x 6.4m with 1.2m draft; twin screw with Perkins diesels (260 hp) 8 kts, 2t bollard pull; 25t load capacity, 4.8t deck crane, two spud legs; 1994 acquired.	
Willendeavour	(2007-present) built 2007 by Neptune Marine BV, Aalst, Netherlands (Multicat Eurocarrier 2209) 22.0m loa x 9.0m with 1.8m draft; twin screw with two Caterpillar diesels (1200 bhp) 9 kts, 15t bollard pull; 80t load capacity; 9.3t crane, anchor winch, bow/stern rollers. <i>(photo right)</i>	
Wiltango	(2009-present) built 2009 by Meercat Workboats, Portsmouth (Meercat RT15 type) 15.5m loa x 6.0m; twin screw with two Doosan Daewoo diesels (320 bhp) 8 kts, 3t bollard pull; 25t load capacity; 4.8t crane, two spud legs; road-transportable.	
Wilwren	(2010-present) mooring/work/safety boat; built 1984 by Mustang Marine, Pembroke Dock as Seaspray for The Milford Docks Co; 9.2m x 3.0m with 0.8m draft; single screw Ford Mermaid (135 hp) 7 kts; 1t bollard pull; 2010 acquired when Williams took 100% control of Williams Marine & Port Services Ltd, Pembroke Dock. <i>(photo right)</i>	
Wiljive	(2011-present) built 2011 by Meercat Workboats, Portsmouth (Meercat RT15 type) 15.5m x 6.0m with 0.8m draft; twin screw with two Doosan Daewoo diesels (320 bhp) 8 kts, 3t bollard pull; 26t load capacity; 4.8t crane, two spud legs; road-transportable. (o.n.917561)	
Willsupply	(2011-present) built 2011 by Manor Marine, Portland; 20.0m loa x 7.0m with 1.8m draft; twin screw with two Doosan Daewoo diesels (720 bhp) 9 kts, 9t bollard pull; 20t deck load capacity; 3.6t crane, bow roller/anchor handling. (o.n.917150)	
Willdart	(2017-present) built 2017 by Meercat Workboats, Hythe (Meercat RT14 type) 38t disp 14.5m loa x 4.85 with 1.5m draft; twin screw with twin Doosan Daewoo diesels (320 bhp) 8.5 kts; 14t load capacity; 3.2t crane; road-transportable. (o.n.922793) <i>(photo right at 21 Berth in August 2021 – DH)</i>	
Willchallenge (iii)	(2021-present) built 2021 by Neptune Marine, Aalst, Netherlands (yn. NP564) (Multicat Eurocarrier 2209) 22.0m loa x 9.0m twin screw with two Caterpillar diesels (1200 bhp) 10 kts, 16t bollard pull; 80t load capacity; 32t crane, anchor winch, bow roller. (IMO 9909261)	

Flat Top Pontoon Barge Fleet

- Wilcarry 1750** (2011-present) built 1963 by Kieler Howaldtswerke AG, Kiel as 600 ton sheerlegs cranebarge **Magnus 1** for Ulrich Harms GmbH (1965 parbuckled sunken **Magdeburg** in Thames) , later renamed **E2501** by Smit, Rotterdam; 45m x 20m with 2.94m loaded draft; capacity 1,085t load, 1,750t max displacement; c.2011 acquired and renamed. (IMO 6725200)
- Wilcarry 1717** (2017-present) built 2017 by Neptune Marine Services, Aalst/Poland 50m x 18.8m with 2.31m loaded draft; capacity 1,680t load, 2,110 tons max displacement; two spud legs. (o.n.923178)
- Wilcarry 1711** (2011-present) built 2011 by Neptune Marine Services, Aalst 50m x 18.8m with 2.31m loaded draft; capacity 1,680t load, 2,110 tons max displacement; two spud legs. *(photo right with crawler crane)*
- Wilcarry 1500** (2002-present) built 2002 by Arkhangelsk RBF, Arkhangelsk, Russia for Neptune Marine Services (yn. NP275); 544 gt, 48.02 x 14m with 2.32m loaded draft; 1,280 tons max deadweight; two spud legs; 20/1/2003 acquired from Neptune Marine Services BV, Aalst, Netherlands. (o.n.906876)
- Wilcarry 504** (2011-present) built 2011 by Neptune Marine Services, Uliandvsk, Russia 30m x 11.2m with 1.96m loaded draft; 491 tons max deadweight; two spud legs. (o.n.918347)
- Wilcarry 503** (2007-present) built 2007 by Neptune Marine Services, China (o.n.913575) *(as Wilcarry 504)*
- Wilcarry 501** (2000-present) built 2000 by Neptune Marine Services, Arkhangelsk, Russia *(as Wilcarry 504)*; 31/7/2005 to WMPS joint venture, then 2010 reacquired. (o.n.905516)
- Wilcarry 350** (c.2010-present) built for planned car ferry at Neyland, Pembrokeshire 33.2m x 9.5m with 1.15m loaded draft; 152 tons dwt; 4-point mooring; c.2010 acquired as **Samson** and renamed.
- Wilcarry 300** (2003-present) built 2003 by Neptune Marine Services, Arkhangelsk 36m x 8m with 1.43m loaded draft; 282 tons deadweight. Two spud legs.
- Wilcarry 250** (1995-present) built 1971 by N.A. Bernard, Amsterdam 45.1m x 8m with 1.33m loaded draft; 255 tons max deadweight; two spud legs; 18/5/1995 acquired from Murray International Contracting Ltd., Edinburgh.
- Wilcarry 22** (????-present) built UK for MOD as un-named landing pontoon; 12.2m x 4.8m with 0.71m loaded draft; 20 tons deadweight; road-transportable.



Vessel managed on behalf of Vestas Blades UK Ltd

- MTB Blade Runner Two** (2018-present) deck cargo vessel built 2003 by Aveco (Teeside) Ltd, Middlesbrough, built for NEG Micon Rotors Ltd, later Vestas Wind Systems Ltd and formerly operated by Blade Runner Shipping Ltd; 416 gross tonnage, 75.0m x 9.5m with 0.75m loaded draft; 3 Schottel jet-pumps from Scandia diesels, 8.7 kts max; 550 sq m deck space with 180t load max capacity; 4/2018 Company took over management of vessel. (IMO 9287754)
(Photograph by David Hornsby during WSS Branch Solent cruise in August 2021)



PARTS TWO AND THREE with details of 100+ former sailing and cargo barges, tugs, tankers, launches, pontoons and other equipment

A – Z of Sail

by Michael Page

For the letter “A” I have chosen the AMISTAD

This is the first of the new third series of Tall Ship Articles.

She was built in 1998 to 2000 at Mystic Seaport, Connecticut using traditional skills and construction techniques common to wooden schooners in this period. Bronze bolts are used as fastenings throughout the ship and it has an external ballast keel of lead and is a re-creation of the original **La Amistad** built in 1839. Details as follows:

Flag - USA - topsail schooner - rig height 91 ft - sail area 5200 sq ft - tonnage 136

Twin diesel engines - loa 81 ft -- beam 23 ft - depth 10 ft

Amistad is a re-creation - not a replica - of the 19th Century schooner La Amistad and to understand her significance it is necessary to recall what is known in history as “The Amistad Incident” of 1839. In that year 53 Africans were illegally kidnapped from West Africa sold into the transatlantic slave trade. The 49 men, three girls and a boy were shackled aboard the Portuguese slave vessel **Tecora** and taken to Havana, Cuba where they were fraudulently classified as native, Cuban born slaves. They were illegally purchased by Jose Ring and Pedro Montez, both Spaniards, transferred them to the coastal cargo schooner **La Amistad** for transport to another part of Cuba.

Three days into the voyage a Mende rice farmer named Sengbe Pich, or “Cinque” to his Spanish captors, led a revolt. After 63 days **La Amistad** and her cargo of Africans was seized as salvage by the United States revenue cutter USS **Washington** of Montauk Point, Long Island, New York and then towed to New London harbour.

The Africans were imprisoned in New Haven on charges of mutiny and murder but after former President John Quincy Adams defended them before the United States Supreme Court, the 35 surviving Africans were returned to Africa in 1841.

This was one of the first human rights cases successfully argued at the United States Supreme Court on behalf of people of African descent and gave strength and focus to the abolitionist movement.

As for **La Amistad**, after being towed in by the USS **Washington** she remained at the wharf behind the Custom House in New London for some 18 months until auctioned by the US Marshall in October 1840 and sold to Captain George Howland and renamed **Jon** when she started trading again. As you will realise **La Amistad** was not a slaver but a general cargo vessel.



*The re-created **La Amistad** under full sail*

Update on ZEBU

Zebu was featured in A-Z of Sail in the last Black Jack.

Sadly just as that issue was compiled she was wrecked on the breakwater at Holyhead. She was sheltering on passage to Bristol when on 15th May she dragged her anchor and ended up on the seawall and was abandoned by her crew.

Following unsuccessful attempts to tow her off her masts and spars were removed by cranes and after further damage she was by 21st May beyond saving. Thanks to Peter Smith and his friend in North Wales who let us know about the tragedy