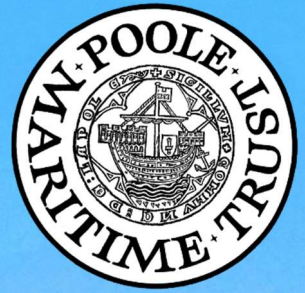


# POOLE MARITIME TRUST

NEWSLETTER FEBRUARY 2025





## CHAIRMAN'S REPORT – February 2025

As ever, the New Year brings with it a host of activities your committee is planning for the next twelve months.

This year is special for two reasons. It is the 80<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the end of the Second World War; VE day in May and VJ day in August. However, there is also another Second World War anniversary of note, in that it is 85 years since the evacuation of British Forces and European civilians from Northern France, notably Dunkirk, Cherbourg and St Valery. The part Poole played in this evacuation is rarely published or even recognised. The fact that over 3000 Dutch and Belgian refugees were brought to Poole and the surrounding area of South Dorset through the efforts and sacrifices local people has, at times, been overlooked. The Trust has therefore planned a number of activities to recognise this, in particular a major exhibition at the Lighthouse.

Our programme team is developing plans for other lectures and visits throughout the year and, as usual, these will be published in the newsletters. I do encourage members to attend these when possible as they provide an interesting insight into the maritime history, and indeed current activity, that the Trust addresses. In this context our team of volunteers will continue to work on the tasks associated with the ever-expanding archive.

As for the future, your committee continues to work on new ideas in light of the good state of the membership in terms of numbers and the size of the archive. This does take time but is certainly a matter we examine closely.

We look forward to seeing you at events and, for those who wish, in our Canford Cliffs office.

***Commodore G H Edwardes OBE RN, Chairman***



The Committee – Poole Maritime Trust

## ARCHIVE AND COLLECTIONS REPORT

The team at the Trust offices at Canford Cliffs have been kept busy on a variety of tasks including researching the result of enquiries, recording and cataloguing an ever-increasing mass of ephemera, images and books. We are indebted to the many donors and, once again, ask that anyone having maritime related material consider donating, ensuring they are preserved in perpetuity for the information of future generations. The collection, despite focussing primarily on the history of Poole Harbour and its environs, includes the maritime industry world-wide. The offices, above Canford Cliffs library, are open each Thursday from 09.30 and visitors are always welcome. Please visit our website for full details.

One recent donor, Tony Horn of Worthing, kindly sent a number of historic and interesting photographs. Four of these are shown herewith taken in the twilight years of steam propulsion in the summer of 1962, the final year that two paddle steamers were based at Poole. Here, perhaps surprisingly, seen alongside on a sunny August Saturday are the Red Funnel paddle steamer "PRINCESS ELIZABETH" and Cosens & Co's "EMBASSY". Their ornate paddle boxes are shown in detail.



However, the board advertising the river cruise to Wareham would have been aboard an open launch at this time - not aboard a paddle steamer! Unlike today, Saturdays back in the sixties were 'changeover' days. In an age when hordes visited Dorset for their annual one or two week holidays (a rarity today) there was a mass migration of humanity in and out of the local seaside resorts, perhaps, likened to busy cruise-ship days in Southampton today. Saturday was,

therefore a very 'quiet' trading day, and the crew rest day when any essential maintenance was undertaken. Both ships were oil-fired. The "PRINCESS ELIZABETH" withdrew from Poole at the end of the 1962 season but went on to operate from Weymouth in 1963, being finally withdrawn following the 1965 season. Unsurprisingly she was sold for scrapping at Southampton.

Her story, however, does not end there. Once her boiler and engines were removed, she once again sold and embarked on a new career as clubhouse/ pub/ restaurant/ art gallery at Hayling Island and upon the river Thames. The latest chapter in the remarkable history of this ship, a veteran on the Dunkirk evacuation, sees her back in Dunkirk. Today, the Princess Elizabeth can be seen from the Quai de l'Estacade, near the Pole Marine. It thus perpetuates the "Spirit of Dunkirk" initiated by Churchill in 1940. In May 2016, Christopher Nolan's team arrived in the city to shoot the film Dunkirk. The Princess Elizabeth is a gourmet restaurant. It has been designed in keeping with the location and the spirit of the ship. On the menu are local specialities and refined dishes in a very British atmosphere. Built in Southampton in 1927 it will be good to see her make her centenary in two years. The "EMBASSY" was the last in a long line of steamers based at Poole. Built as a cross Solent ferry in 1911 she survived until 1967 when she was towed to Belgium for scrapping. The end of an amazing era.





## POOLE'S ROLE AT DUNKIRK

On the 85th anniversary of the evacuation of France, Poole Maritime Trust, with the assistance of a number of other local organisations, is preparing an exhibition and video that will tell the story of Poole's role at Dunkirk.

**THE EXHIBITION: LIGHTHOUSE ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT, POOLE**  
**30 April – 27 May 2025**

This will include details about:

- the arrival, immediately prior to Dunkirk, of small Dutch and Belgian ships into Poole Harbour, loaded with refugees fleeing the Nazis;
- the significant role that many of these Dutch ships, known as "skoots", played at Dunkirk;
- the story of the flotilla of small Poole fishing vessels, ferries, yachts and Poole's lifeboat, the 'Thomas Kirk Wright' and how they made their way to Dover and in some cases on to Dunkirk;
- the story of the 2nd Battalion Dorset Regiment's evacuation from Dunkirk.

We do have a good deal of material on these topics, but we'd like any further related stories, photographs and possible interviews with those whose Poole-based family members played some role in the Dunkirk evacuation.

Did a family member sail a boat to Dover? Are you aware of a boat that left Poole for Dover then on to Dunkirk? Did a family member arrive on one of the Dutch or Belgian small ships, to be initially landed on Brownsea Island? Did they settle locally, or did they move on? Was one of your family members a soldier evacuated from Dunkirk or a sailor who took part in the evacuation?

If you'd like to contribute, please message us directly on our facebook group (Poole Maritime Trust) or email Jack Hawkins or Gavin MacLachlan at:

[research@poolemaritimetrust.org](mailto:research@poolemaritimetrust.org)

### POOLE MARITIME TRUST'S

New Year's Lunch  
at RMYC

6 Jan 2025



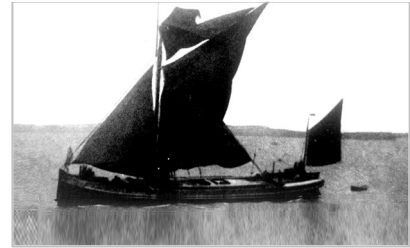
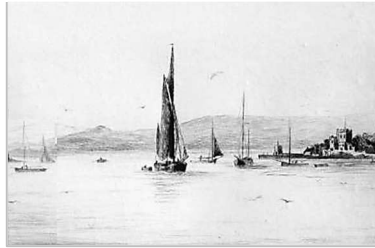


## D-Day: Poole Bay and 'Zone O' with the US Lighter Fleet

by Harry Alexander

for PFBC's D-Day Research Group

In historical terms, Operations Overlord & Neptune with D-Day will always be highly significant. There's a vast amount that has been written about these op's (encompassing a short period of time). In noting the op's end-date as August 1944, Overlord had 3 months duration and 3 years to plan, whereas D-Day after a stand-down on the 5th is acknowledged to have continued to 24th July. Yet, there are still many certain aspects which have not been the subject of in-depth research; in particular, the narrative of the Thames Barges known as 'Lighters', which were requisitioned, and how these were prepared for the US military + D-Day, has been understated (especially in the US). In the UK, there is the exception of those who support the rich and comprehensive Thames history including lovely sailing barges - the Blue Barge to Poole, and Holton Heath WW1 cordite barges.



The 'Blue Barge' at Poole by R.E Eurich / Barge off Brownsea by Frank Harding / RNCF Holton Heath Barge 'Alfred'

There was a significant chapter in WW1 when Thames barges were adapted as the 'Black Beetles' - i.e. they towed Landing Barges for troops in the doomed Gallipoli Campaign, yet had a short-lived impact.

On the 9th January 1941, a month after the Japanese attack on Hawaii and USA entering the war, Harry Hopkins the special emissary of President Roosevelt arrived at Poole, by the BOAC's 'Clare'. He met with PM Churchill and the War Cabinet, to confirm FDR's support + to conduct negotiations. To take the pressure off the Soviet Army's frontline, the US and Russian leaderships called, in 1942, for the British Government to consider a limited landing on the French Coast as Operation Sledgehammer. Within the forward planning, 1,000 Thames barges usually involved in the disposal of rubbish were requisitioned and sent to boatyards around the UK for the main modification of having a ramp fitted. Some of these were delivered to yards in Poole and Hamworthy; whilst 2 were bombed at Salcombe. There were deep concerns about this invasion proposal, that were borne out by the Dieppe Raid in August, affirming that significant resources will be needed to breach the enemy's Atlantic Wall.

However, the successful invasion of French North Africa, with Operation Torch during November, gave encouragement to cooperation between Allied Forces, due to the US massed-participation!

There was a second invasion plan devised in the Spring of 1943 as Operation Roundup, but in the realisation that there would have to be massive seaborne and airborne assaults it was then shelved. A similar exercise would be commissioned for Operation Neptune with D-Day when there was the focus on the acquisition of mainly motorised Lighters from those working the Thames & Medway.



Photo left is an example of barges that were used as X- Lighters WW1

Photo right is an example of barges from the interwar years, steel-built broad beamed + a shallow draught

Ref.: *The Poole History Online Coll.*



**The Tug 'Redeem' with Barge at Poole**  
(Note: *Redeem's* flat-iron funnel laid down)

**Dredger 'Branksea' with 'Jump' at Poole**

In the preparation of the invasion force, the Allies after several shelved or discarded proposals, in the lead-up to Operation Overlord (confirmed at the Trident Conf. Washington in May 1944), amassed a million US troops in the UK in a year, that joined British, Canadian & Free French etc.

Late Spring 5 Forces with 5,000 vessels were brought into gathering zones. US Infantry in Dorset were integral to Force O (i.e. Omaha); Force G embarking around The Solent was for Gold Beach; and to the west of Dorset - Force U (Utah) embarked from Devon - Dartmouth and Brixham.

The Admiralty had gathered 1,200 Thames Lighters (Dumb Barges - almost being flat-bottomed): Made of steel, they were strengthened, and modified by having large, hinged, front ramps fitted. These were worked-on in south coast ports - to keep the enemy 'guessing' an attack upon Calais was being planned, and also dummy barges were located in the S.E. for Op Fortitude's deception. 400 Landing Barges would take part on D-Day with British Crews: 384 US-Notations and 16 British. From the photographs, it's difficult to distinguish between the types of Landing Craft and Landing Barges (US Landing Barges had 'US' identification capitals, but had slightly curved prows before ramps) except for the LCK and LBK - i.e. floating kitchens, which had tall superstructures built upon them.

The Kitchen Barges, with their very shallow draughts, were circa 24 metres long x 6½ metres wide, and were fitted with twin Chrysler engines; and had a complement of 24, including a dozen cooks.



**Kitchen Barge 6... baked bread + 1,600 hot meals, 800 cold daily**      **LCK Landing Craft Kitchen 10 served Troops on Juno Beach**

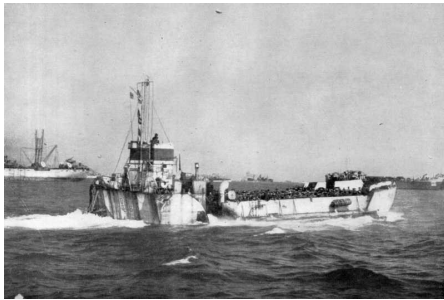
"That is a considerable achievement for 13 cooks, among them men who until recently were a barber, a miner, a bricklayer and a factory hand. The Commanding Officer invited us on board. We found a ship spotlessly clean, a floating kitchen.

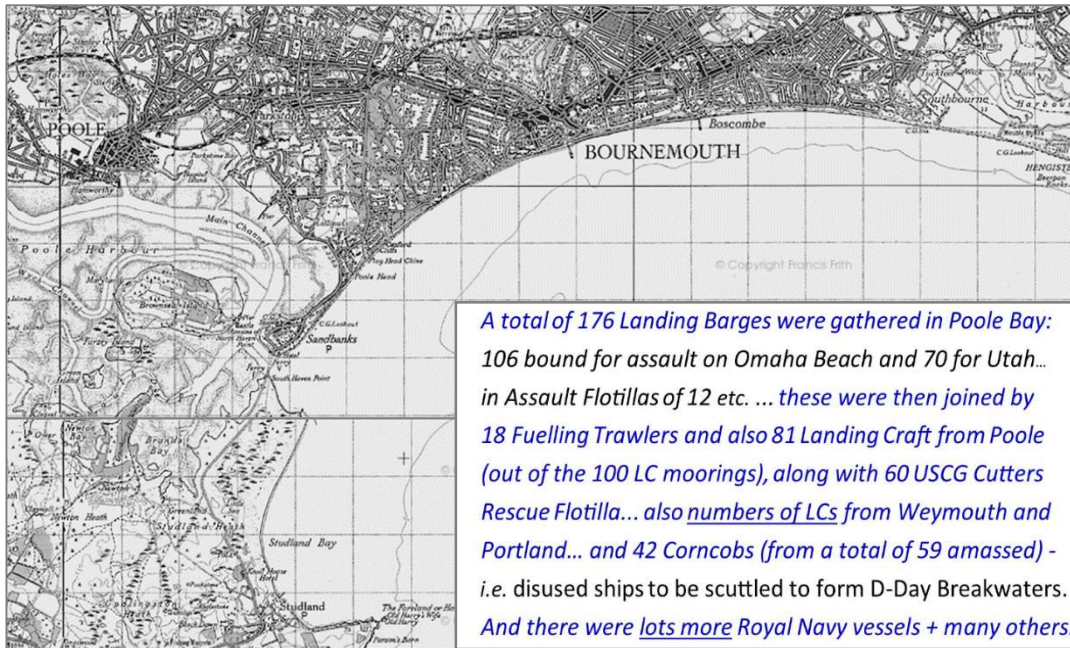
We had many near misses. One shell dropped five yards away and peppered the meat safe with shrapnel. We are a lucky ship. There were no casualties".      - **LBK Landing Barge Kitchen 6**

The LBK as a floating kitchen (LCKs were used at Gold, Juno, Sword) was the most modified of the Lighters.

LBV (Landing Boat Vehicle) appears as the greatest number of US ex-Lighters, with British Crews.

There were also other LBs as Cable, Emergency, Flak, Gun, Oilers, Supply & Repair and Water tanks.





**POOLE BAY:** Lighters Converted to LANDING BARGES Manned by British Crews for **UTAH** BEACHEAD

US 8th LBV Flotilla	No. 5	9	14	15	16	21	30	51	65	73	82	83			
US 19th LBV Flotilla	29	31	35	50	63	72	87	113	118	121	137	174			
US 20th LBV Flotilla	151	154	157	170	175	181	184	186	187	210	212	230			
US 33rd LB(S&R) Flo'	12	30	32	LBO	LBO	LBO	LBO	LBO	LBO	LBO	LBO	LBO	LBO	LBW	1xFT
				13	21	24	26	77	78	82	92	95	96	6	
US 34th LB(S&R) Flo'	28	33	34	37	52	55									
" " " "	LBO	LBO	LBO	LBO	LBO	LBO	LBO	LBO	LBO	LBO	LBW	LBW	LBK	LBK	4xFT
	6	11	30	44	54	63	69	87	88	89	1	4	3	8	

ABBREVIATIONS' KEY: LBV Landing Barge Vehicle LBE Landing Barge Emergency Repair LBO Oiler LBW Water LBK Kitchen FT Fuelling Trawler

Total Barges UTAH = 70 with 5 Fuelling Trawlers

**POOLE BAY:** Lighters Converted to LANDING BARGES Manned by British Crews for **OMAHA** BEACHEAD

US 7th LBV Flotilla	No. 3	11	23	53	67	70	76	101	153	206	214	225			
US 9th LBV Flotilla	98	100	132	140	141	156	161	172	176	211	228	239			
US 10th LBV Flotilla	2	26	49	68	78	79	81	103	105	131	150	192			
US 11th LBV Flotilla	8	27	61	69	84	89	95	104	106	124	191	232			
US 12th LBV Flotilla	12	33	42	64	66	92	94	109	160	203	209	229			
US 18th LBV Flotilla	7	37	39	55	62	80	93	102	129	136	149	168			
US 32nd LB(S&R) Flo'	LBE	LBE	LBE	LBE	LBE	LBE	LBO	LBO	LBO	LBO	LBO	LBO	LBO	LBO	LBO
	26	31	57	58	59	60	10	16	18	37	46	56	57	84	97
" " " "												LBK	LBW	LBW	4xFT
												5	7	8	
US 39th LB(S&R) Flo'	LBE	LBE	LBE	LBE	LBE	LBE	LBE	LBO	LBO	LBO	LBO	LBO	LBW	LBW	LBW
	8	10	17	25	27	29	41	46	27	68	93	98	15	18	20
" " " "														LBK	9xFT
														7	

ABBREVIATIONS' KEY: LBV Landing Barge Vehicle LBE Landing Barge Emergency Repair LBO Oiler LBW Water LBK Kitchen FT Fuelling Trawler

Total Barges OMAHA = 106 with 13 Fuelling Trawlers

Cumulative Total Barges = 176 with 18 Fuelling Trawlers



## **LEST WE FORGET**

### **80th Anniversary**

On 11th December 1944 just before 5am, a Sunderland Flying Boat ML782 from 228 Squadron came down in Plymouth Sound with engine failure, killing two crew members. It came to rest nose down by the anti-submarine boom. The aircraft was carrying depth charges. A civilian salvage team was summoned from Burt's and Co. of Hamworthy.



The civilian salvage team was involved in retrieving the bodies and salvaging the aircraft. After a hectic day in dangerous conditions the flotation bags were attached and the aircraft slung under a crane. However a large explosion, thought to have come from the removal of the depth charges created a large eruption of water, killing nine men, six of whom were from Poole. The aircraft sank, taking with it the 15ft salvage dinghy and a 40ft seaplane tender.

Four of those killed were Poole fishermen. This included John Wills and his younger brother Philip aged just 17 as well as their cousin James. The loss of life was particularly devastating to the men's families and to the Poole fishing community.

**George Henry Thomas BROWN aged 24**

**Henry Edward NEVILLE aged 28**

**Frederick William SHERWOOD aged 24**

**James WILLS aged 36**

**John Samson WILLS age 23**

**Philip WILLS aged 17**

The courage and tenacity of those souls was exceptional. May they Rest in Peace.

We will Remember Them

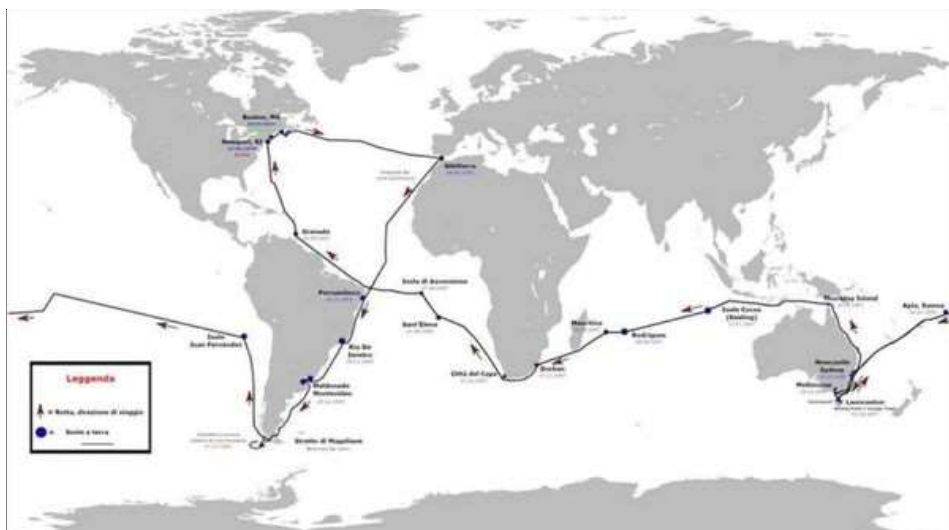
## JOSHUA SLOCUM

On the evening of 9th October 1896, a lone sailor enters Sydney Harbour and moors his yacht in North Harbour.

His name was Joshua Slocum, a 51-year-old American who was making the first known solo voyage around the world.

Slocum had set out from Boston in April 1895 in his boat named SPRAY, a yawl that measured a little over 11 metres. The day following his arrival, Slocum and SPRAY were given a rousing welcome as a flotilla of various craft and yachtsmen, escorted them up the harbour to a more secure mooring at Shell Cove, Cremorne. During his stay, Sydney businessman Mark Foy presented Slocum with a new set of sails for SPRAY. After nearly two months in Sydney, Slocum left on 6 December 1896 on the next leg of his solo voyage, arriving back in the U.S at Rhode Island in June 1898.

Photos - SPRAY at Shell Cove, and with new sails on the harbour.



## PORT UPDATE - by Kevin Mitchell

*Photos taken by Kevin Mitchell unless otherwise stated.*

Last year ended in good news for cargo shipments at the Port of Poole. *AAL Paris* arrived on the morning of 18<sup>th</sup> November, having departed the South Korean port of Masan on 3<sup>rd</sup> October, with a stopover at Singapore.



The Fowey Harbour tug *Cannis*, along with the PHC port tug *Herbert Ballam*, met *AAL Paris* at the Bar Buoy to assist with the berthing at South Quay of what was the largest cargo ship to have ever called at Poole, at 180m long and 28m wide. Having unloaded around 100 containers, she sailed on the morning of 20<sup>th</sup> November for the German port of Bremen with her remaining cargo including wind turbine components and four tenders most likely destined for the cruise ship *Artania*, which was in dry dock at Bremerhaven at the time. On 14<sup>th</sup> December the 130m long *Idunn* arrived at South Quay to load 7,000 tons of Purbeck ball clay destined for the Spanish port of Castellon. This is the largest single shipment of local clay from the port, which is in high demand from the ceramic and pharmaceutical industries because of its fine quality.



In the last Newsletter it was mentioned that the contracts to provide ro-ro passenger and

freight ferry services to Jersey and Guernsey will be renewed during March 2025. This whole tender process turned into something of a fiasco, but it has now been decided that Condor Ferries will continue operating to Guernsey, and Channel Island newcomers DFDS to Jersey from Poole and Portsmouth. At the time of writing DFDS had not published their timetables, but it has been stated that the Poole operation will be in the hands of two Incat fastcraft, currently named *Levante Jet* and *Tarifa Jet* (photos supplied by DFDS) and until recently used on DFDS services across the Strait of Gibraltar.



The *Tarifa Jet* is a sister to the former *Condor Express*, *Condor Vitesse* and *Condor Rapide*. Condor Ferries has served the Channel Islands since 1964, but is to be rebranded as Brittany Ferries Channel Islands, Brittany Ferries now being the majority shareholder and in full operational control of Condor.



*Condor Liberation* returned to Poole on 30<sup>th</sup> November following an out-of-water overhaul in Cherbourg, and on 4<sup>th</sup> December moved to Bulwark Quay for restowing of its liferafts. *Condor Liberation*, as well as the freighter *Commodore Goodwill*, do not feature in the new Guernsey-only schedule, but the high-speed *Condor Voyager* will continue to call at Poole.





Over the Christmas period the *Barfleur* moved to lay-up in its usual place along the Caen Canal in France. Early in the New Year she sailed for overhaul at the Remontowa shipyard in Polish port of Gdansk, and is due to return to Poole-Cherbourg duties from 25<sup>th</sup> March through to 2<sup>nd</sup> November.

The Sandbanks jetty suffered major structural problems in mid-November and was taken out of use. The John Lewis Partnership ferry *Castello* had to use the Royal Motor Yacht Club jetty instead. Plans have now been approved for a new jetty and slipway on the same site to be used by National Trust and John Lewis Partnership boats, including the vehicle and cargo ferry *Brownsea Seahorse*. Work to remove the existing jetty, undertaken by Jenkins Marine, started on 8<sup>th</sup> January. As has become customary, the Sandbanks chain ferry was free to all users on Christmas Day, passengers asked instead to donate their fare to Poole lifeboat station. RNLI fundraisers were on board the *Bramble Bush Bay* and collected £2,600.44p. This year marks the 160<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Poole lifeboat station.

The superyacht *Avantage* arrived at South Quay on 12<sup>th</sup> November, as captured by Frazer Hockey. The 88m *Avantage*, built in 2020, was brought into port by a PHC pilot who was celebrating his birthday that same day, so that was a nice treat!



## AN UNKNOWN TOUCHING STORY - DIAMANTIS

On October 3, 1939, the "Diamantis" was about 60 miles from Land's End, England. It was 1:30 in the afternoon. Suddenly, the German submarine U35 surfaced and signaled the Greek ship to stop. The captain of the "Diamantis" Panagis Pateras, in a boat, went to the U35 and spoke with its commander Werner Lott, who told him that he intended to sink the ship and that the crew members of the "Diamantis" should enter the lifeboats.

Due to the severe weather that prevailed, the boats of the "Diamantis" would not hold up. Then, Lott decided to board the entire crew, 28 people, on the submarine. The "Diamantis", without any crew members on board, was sunk by U35's torpedoes. After 28 hours, the Greek sailors, who were very well received by the Germans (they helped them dry their clothes, gave them hot food and cigarettes), disembarked from U35 in the Irish port of Ventry. The disembarkation took place in a U35 boat, whose oarsman was Walter Kalabunch.

As the submarine was about 50 meters from the coast and the boat could only carry 2 people, Kalabunch would certainly suffer by making the "route" from U35 to the coast of Ventry 14 times (for the 28 Greeks).

After all the Greeks had disembarked, U35 left. The residents of Ventry, after recovering from the initial surprise, took care of the crew of the "Diamond", which on October 5, 1939, left for Dublin. It should be noted that in 1939, Ireland was a neutral country, that is, it had not been involved in the war.

The U35, two months later, was sunk by British destroyers, near the coast of Norway. Its crew was saved, with the help of the British. Lott was imprisoned in the Tower of London, where he met Lord Mountbatten (Louis Mountbatten), with whom he became close friends. Then, until the end of the war, he remained a prisoner in Canada.

This action of Lott caused a worldwide sensation. In Germany, however, he received



strong reprimands, because he endangered the submarine and its crew.

And, in a show of smallness, the Germans never allowed Lott to be awarded by Greece! The Greek government officially requested after the end of the war to award Lott, but the German government did not allow this to happen...

The great man, Governor Lott, returned to Ventry in 1984. He was 77 years old at the time. "I did what I had to do, in the name of humanity," he said. With this act of his, probably unknown to the general Greek public, he proved that even in times of war some people forget everything else and simply show that above all they are Humans...

Source: Nikos Pigadas, "Volunteers in the Death Convoys", TO PONTIKI publications, 2007.

## FAREWELL TO THE QUEEN OF BRITTANY

By Andrew S. Cooke

After 35 years of faithful service, the 24,534gt/1989-built Bretagne departed Portsmouth on 3rd November 2024 for her final round-trip sailing to St. Malo. The final service departure from the Brittany port at 10.30 on 4th November was accompanied by horn blasts, the ship was dressed overall (prior to her arrival that morning) and Breton dancers and musicians were aboard to perform.



Final departure St Malo 4 Nov 2024 (Nicolas Levy)

This included out on the aft deck as the ship sailed away from port. Previous Captains and other past crewmembers were aboard along with the Chairman and CEO of Brittany Ferries. Crepe making displays, Breton dance displays and even the former crewmembers singing a sea shanty formed part of the celebratory day voyage back to Portsmouth. There were also

bridge visits for small groups. The ship was escorted into port by the resident Boluda Towage (ex-SMS Towage) tugs and a delayed 20.15 final departure from Portsmouth was given the same treatment, with an exchange of horn blasts with the 35,891gt/2002-built Mont St. Michel in the harbour. On the morning of 5<sup>th</sup> November, the final arrival at a fog shrouded St. Malo saw the ship unloaded and then vacate the berth to make way for the waiting 29,468gt/2009-built Armorique, which had sailed from Plymouth overnight at the end of her 2024 season on the Roscoff route. The latter ship then took over the St. Malo duties until 12<sup>th</sup> February 2024. The Bretagne returned to the berth later that day before bidding a fond farewell and setting course for Le Havre, with a call at the ferry terminal before lay-up in the port at Terminal de L'Europe the next day to await her future. The ship was sales listed for a reported £35m.

The Bretagne was the first cruise ferry built for Brittany Ferries and brought with her new standards for ferry design, as well as becoming a firm favourite with her passengers from the outset. Delivered by Chantiers d'Atlantique on 6<sup>th</sup> July 1989, the ship was specifically built for Plymouth-Roscoff/Santander/Cork with her maiden voyage being on 16<sup>th</sup> July 1989 from Roscoff. The Santander route traffic volumes soon began to outgrow the Bretagne so the rebuilt 31,788gt/1987-built Nils Holgersson of TT Line, renamed Val de Loire, took over at



Plymouth in 1993 with the Bretagne being redeployed to Portsmouth where she made the St. Malo route her own after just 4 years on the route that she was built for.

Furnished in typical Breton decor featuring original artwork by Alexander Goudie throughout, the ship offered cabins and cinemas on Decks 1 and 2 below the main vehicle deck with 4 accommodation decks above the upper garage deck (5). The passenger capacity was 2,056 passengers with a maximum of 580 cars/39 freight units. Overnight accommodation was in the form of 376 cabins (1,146 berths) and 454 reclining seats. Deck 6 offers cabins plus the Information Desk, a Bureau de Change, Tourist Office, La Boutique (perfumery etc) and Le Kiosque (magazine/gifts/confectionery etc) around the atrium.



Atrium

One of the ship's best attributes is also on Deck 6 in the form of the sun deck on the bow, something quite unique aboard a ferry.



Sun Deck

Deck 7 offers La Baule self-service restaurant overlooking the bow, La Vitrine (gifts), the main onboard shop and La Galerie promenade with seating along the starboard side of the ship, parallel to the shop. Located aft was Les

Abers, the A la Carte Restaurant and the Yacht Club Piano Bar. The main sun deck is located aft on this level. Deck 8 offer cabins forward, reclining seat lounges, Le Cafe La Gerbe de Locranan, at table seating with the main bar/show lounge, the Gwenn Ha Du, located at the stern. Deck 9 aft featured reclining seats and the Commodore Lounge, Le Cercle des Voyageurs. Some public areas were revised over the years, including during the £5 million refit in 2009, which saw her visit Gdansk, Poland. The refit included the refurbishment of all 376 cabins, including the creating of 50 new Club Four cabins. The inside cabins on decks 1 and 2 were equipped with flat screen televisions. The La Gerbe de Locronan Salon de Thé was refurbished, creating a new cyber-lounge café (the at-table seating area on Deck 8) with all reclining seat lounges receiving a spruce up too. The self-service restaurant was also refurbished. This refit also saw the Bretagne emerge in the revised company livery, which was further amended since then.



Gwenn Ha Du Bar



La Galerie





Les Abers

In March 2004 a new service between Portsmouth and Cherbourg was introduced, using the Bretagne and the Val de Loire, with both ships covering this and the St. Malo service.



Bretagne 2004

The "Val" had been displaced from Plymouth in 2004 by the new Pont Aven. In autumn 2004 the Bretagne returned to Plymouth after 11 years away, taking over services between Plymouth and Roscoff following the sale of the 13,505gt/1978-built Duc de Normandie. The 2006 season saw the Bretagne return to the St. Malo route, following the sale of the Val de Loire to DFDS, where she continues to operate today as the King Seaways. The Bretagne was used on the Cherbourg to Poole route between 26th February 2007 and 10th March 2007, becoming the largest ferry to use the Dorset port at that time. The Bretagne then became the only passenger vessel in the Brittany Ferries fleet (at that time) to visit every port served by the company and to have operated on all the then current routes.



Bretagne – Poole 2nd Mar 2007



Bretagne – Cherbourg 1<sup>st</sup> Mar 2007

It was originally planned that she would return to Poole in January 2008 to cover for the absence of the Cotentin, sailing to Cherbourg alongside the 20,133gt/1992-built Barfleur and Poole-Santander at weekends. However, this plan was dropped shortly after 2008 schedule was published and the Bretagne instead provided refit cover for the 35,891gt/202-built Mont St Michel on the Portsmouth-Ouistreham route. Perhaps the most unexpected ports of call for the ship were St. Helier (Jersey) on 28<sup>th</sup> May 2024 and St. Peter Port (Guernsey) on 4<sup>th</sup> June 2024 for berthing trials related to the Condor/Brittany Ferries bid for the 2025-2050 Channel Islands contract. The Bretagne's days were numbered when Brittany Ferries took delivery of the 36,965gt/2024-built Saint-Malo on 18<sup>th</sup> October 2024 at the CMI Jinling Weihai shipyard in China. The custom-built and LNG-powered E-Flexer from Stena Ro-Ro is the company's first hybrid-powered ferry, running on LNG and battery power. Chartered by Somabret, a consortium uniting the Brittany Region and its four departments, the ship enters service on 12<sup>th</sup> February 2025. On 21<sup>st</sup> October the Saint-Malo began her delivery voyage and arrived in Santander in December for dry docking at the Astander Shipyard and transfer to the French flag. The Bretagne is already hugely missed by many, and we wish her well in any future career.



**Bretagne – Eastern Solent 2012**



**Bretagne at Portsmouth**

**Bretagne off Bembridge**



## **Bretagne – Technical Details**

IMO:	8707329
Port of Registry:	Morlaix, France
Ordered:	1986
Shipyard:	Chantiers de l'Atlantique, Saint-Nazaire, France
Construction Cost:	£55 million
Yard number:	D29
Launch Date:	4 <sup>th</sup> February 1989
Delivered:	6 <sup>th</sup> July 1989
Christening Ceremony:	12th July 1989
Maiden Voyage:	16th July 1989 Roscoff-Plymouth
Withdrawn by Brittany Ferries:	4th November 2024
Gross Tonnage:	24,534gt
Net Tonnage:	13,242nt
Deadweight:	2,111dwt
Length Overall:	151.20m (as built)/152.20m (when ducktail added)
Beam:	26.00m (as built)/27.80m (when sponsons added)
Draught:	6.20m
Hull Depth:	8.50m
Air Draught:	41.00m
Decks:	10
Main Engines:	4x 12-cylinder 5,950hp Wärtsilä-Crepelle medium speed diesels
Total Output:	24,132hp/17,760kW
Auxiliary Engines:	3 x Wartsilla 6R32 diesel alternator sets
Propulsion:	2x Variable pitch propellers
Service Speed:	20.5 knots
Maximum Speed:	25 knots
Passenger Capacity:	2,056 passengers
Car Capacity:	580 vehicles
Freight Capacity:	39 units
Cabins:	376
Berths:	1,146
Reclining Seats:	454
Crew:	134

## BRITISH RAILWAYS AND THE GREAT WAR

*Taken from British Railways and the Great War by Edwin A Pratt - Volume II - published 1921*

The possibility of the Channel ports being captured by the enemy was recognised and among other measures taken as a matter of prudence and precaution, in the event of such a contingency actually arising, was that of providing for the evacuation of Richborough [Kent].

Evidence was now afforded of the foresight shown in the establishment of a southern as well as a northern terminal for the cross-Channel train ferry services; but the mere transfer to Southampton of the ferry steamers which had been running from Richborough would not, it was felt, suffice in itself under the conditions that might now arise.

Action had already been taken in the direction of creating a large fleet of 1,000-ton cross-Channel barges which were to proceed no farther than ports on the French coast, and not attempt to pass along the inland waterways; but Richborough, whatever the military situation, would not be able to accommodate all these vessels. So it was decided that the Town Quay, and also, Poole Harbour, should be utilised as places from which war material could be sent overseas by a barge service. IN the case of Southampton this barge service would supplement the train-ferry just as, in the case of Richborough, the train-ferry had supplemented the initial barge service there; whilst the Town Quay at Southampton and the harbour at Poole would be still more useful if the emergency that might be brought about did actually occur.

These proposals were carried out at the earliest possible moment as regards the Town Pier at Southampton, where a barge service was begun in July 1918. About twenty barges were employed altogether and as a rule, two or three of them were towed across the Channel daily to such destinations as Cherbourg, Calais, Havre and Boulogne, with one or two trips to Dunkirk.

Action was also taken at Poole Harbour to provide for the new traffic with which the port might have to deal. Alterations had to be mad at the Town Quay, additional wharves were required and a railway connection with the main line of the London and South Western system was established; but the completion of the full programme of contemplated work was rendered unnecessary by the defeat of the enemy and the passing of the emergency against which provision was to be made.

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### CASTELLO

Brownsea Castle launch,  
alongside the Sandbanks jetty







## **SOCIETY FOR POOLE**

### **PROGRAMME 2025**

All meetings are held at the Oakdale Club, 92 Darbys Lane, Poole BH15 3EU 7pm for 7.30pm

<b>18<sup>th</sup> February</b>	<b>The Mortar Wreck Tom Cousins</b>
<b>18<sup>th</sup> March</b>	<b>The history of Carter &amp; Co Jo Amey</b>
<b>15<sup>th</sup> April</b>	<b>AGM</b>

**Full details can be found on website**

[www.societyforpoole.org](http://www.societyforpoole.org)



## **POOLE MARITIME TRUST**

### **Spring Programme 2025**

**Travellers' Tales / Poole Maritime Trust  
Talks**

**at the  
Royal Motor Yacht Club Sandbanks,  
Poole BH13 7RE**

**13<sup>th</sup> February 2025**

**Project Kraken (Border Patrol)- A  
talk by Charlotte Baylis and Mark  
Felthams 8pm**

**13<sup>th</sup> March 2025**

**John Smith - A talk about the  
'Battle of Britain over Poole 8pm**

**The Upstairs Bar at the Royal  
Motor Yacht Club will open from  
7:30 pm the talks will start at 8pm.  
(RMYC members only allowed in the  
main bar downstairs).**

**16<sup>th</sup> April 2025 Poole  
Maritime Trust AGM & Luncheon**

**11 for 11:30 Speaker Verity Joy  
(winner of Turland Award) -  
Luncheon to follow**

Thank you to all contributors. We welcome any future submissions to our Newsletter.

Please email these submissions to our secretary: [secretary@poolemaritimetrust.org](mailto:secretary@poolemaritimetrust.org)

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