

Vol 58 No 2 Summer 2023

# ***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 – August excepted- at the Seafarers' Centre, Cambridge Road, Crosby, L22 1RQ**



**GREEN ATTITUDE at Tranmere Oil Terminal, 22<sup>nd</sup> February 2023. (Editor)**

# ***Mersey Log***

Summer Issue 2023

Editor: Adrian Sweeney

E Mail: [a.j.sweeney@blueyonder.co.uk](mailto:a.j.sweeney@blueyonder.co.uk)

Tel: 07887482024

## **Merseyside Branch Officers and Committee 2022/2023**

Chairman: John Luxton

Vice-Chairman: Adrian Sweeney

Hon. Secretary: Dave Crolley

Hon. Treasurer: John Williams

Outside Visits Secretary: Dave Crolley

Committee Members: Geoff Holmes, Stan McFerran.

## **Branch News**

### **February 2023**

For our February 2023 meeting we once again welcome our old friend Iain Quinn from The Coastal Cruising Association. Our members enjoyed Iain's presentation that centred on vessels from The Isle of Man Steam Packet Co. that visited mostly ports on the Clyde but also Ireland and Wales as well as here on Merseyside. Iain is a great speaker that is always very amusing and gives fascinating explanations of each of his wonderful slides. Thank you Iain for coming to visit us and hopefully we will see you again soon.

### **March 2023**

For our March 2023 meeting for the first hour was an illustrated talk by two volunteers from the Talks Team of the Daniel Adamson Preservation Society. They described the history of the building of the canal, the people who worked on it, the ships that sailed up it, some of the incidents that occurred and some strange visitors, all contributing to the fascinating and continuing story of this great North West waterway. Many thanks go to Les Green and Chris Ellams for an excellent presentation. After the interval we showed a couple of Manchester Ship Canal DVD's which showed us a nostalgic record of the canal, filmed from its construction up to the present day.

### **April 2023**

For our April 2023 meeting we were pleased to welcome once again John Hooley from Macclesfield who gave us another fantastic presentation titled 'From the Firth of Clyde to the land of MacBraynes'. He showed all manner of steamers that had connections to trains and terminals around the Clyde. He started with vessels belonging to the Glasgow and South West Region Railways around the 1800's, North British Railways, White Funnel vessels and finished up showing images of David MacBraynes Ltd vessels. Once again John also showed us examples of steam trains that once visited many of these ports during that era. A really interesting and entertaining evening John, thank you very much and we hope to see you again next year.

### **May 2023**

For our May 2023 meeting our own branch member Simon Smith gave us a tremendous presentation of a 70 day trip he took aboard the Container Ship Rickmers Singapore in 2011. His voyage started in Hamburg, Germany and terminated at Kobe, Japan. The areas he visited included The River Elbe, Genoa, The Suez Canal, Oman, U.A.E., Iraq, India, Singapore, lots of Chinese Ports including

Shanghai before finally arriving at his final destination of Kobe. The many ships Simon showed us that he saw on this voyage were fascinating including many types of many types of vessels we hadn't seen before. Thank you very much Simon for a great evening's entertainment and we will look forward to watching another of your voyages again very soon.

## Merseyside Maritime News

February 2023

### Stena Line and Peel Ports Sign New Deal

**Stena Line**, has signed a new deal with Peel Ports, a major UK Port operator, to operate their 12 Quays port and ferry terminal in Birkenhead until the beginning of the 22nd Century. The Swedish company has operated twice daily ferry services to Belfast since 2011 and this new deal will see them continue to operate there for at least another 77 years, until 2100. The length of this deal demonstrates the success of the working partnership between the two companies, which now want to further strengthen their relationship together for the long term. Significant investments have been made to meet current and future needs of their customers, providing them with the right opportunities for them to expand. This approach has proved to be successful with trade in Birkenhead growing continually over the past 12 years. **Stena Line** operates 6 routes and 12 vessels across the region and Birkenhead has been a key focus for investment in recent years. In 2021 and 2022 Stena Line launched two new E-Flexer ferries on their Birkenhead to Belfast service, STENA EDDA and STENA EMBLA. These brand-new state-of-the-art ferries increased passenger and freight capacity on the route to Belfast by a third.

Subsequently **Stena Line** has made further investments with the recent purchase of two sites adjacent to the 12 Quays Terminal, to provide additional freight storage for its freight customers as they continue to expand their businesses there.

Niclas Martensson, CEO of **Stena Line**, says: *"After 12 successful years in 12 Quays our business in Birkenhead continues to flourish year-after-year. This deal is a sign of our long-term commitment to Birkenhead and Peel Ports, with whom we have a very strong partnership. We will continue to make significant investments to increase our services to our customers across the Irish Sea."*

David Huck, Chief Operating Officer at Peel Ports Group says *"We have built a highly successful partnership with **Stena Line** over the years for the developing of services across the Irish Sea, and we are delighted this long-term agreement reaffirms our commitment to enable further investment into Birkenhead and the Mersey cluster."*

The value of the deal has not been disclosed.

STENA EUROPE arrived at Cammell Laird for refit on Wed 15 Feb and went into dry dock. A couple of days later she was moved into the Wet Basin. Earlier in the month she had suffered a small engine room fire whilst off Rosslare after her passage from Fishguard.

On Sat 18 Feb two Scottish vessels that had been refitting at Cammell Laird at Birkenhead began their return to home waters. CLANSMAN of **Caledonian MacBrayne** departed on her way to Oban and HROSSEY of **Northlink** began her passage back to Aberdeen. As it turned out CLANSMAN did not return to service as her starboard engine broke down as soon as she got back to Oban and she had to sail to the Clyde to await repairs.

On Tues 21 Feb BOREALIS of Fred Olsen Cruise Line departed Liverpool, via Southampton for her 80 Days Around the World cruise. This is the first circumnavigation of the globe cruise to start from Liverpool for many a year, certainly in the current cruising era. She was due back in Liverpool again

on 21 May as on her return to Southampton she was due to do a 7-day cruise to Norway from there before she was to operate a 2-night 19-21 May cruise back to Liverpool (that the NW RNLI were promoting).

## March 2023

### WEC Lines Expands Port of Liverpool Coverage

Dutch shipping company WEC Lines has expanded its existing service into the Port of Liverpool with a new series of weekly calls into the port from Northern Spain, Portugal, North Africa and the Canary Islands. The weekly services are in addition to the existing Portuguese and Spanish routes operating at the port since 2019. The new direct weekly services from Bilbao, Vigo and Gijón in Spain, Casablanca in Morocco, Setúbal and Leixões in Portugal and Santa Cruz and Las Palmas in the Canaries commenced this month and will import a range of southern European and north African products. Roger Megann, Managing Director from WEC Lines said: *"This is a significant upgrade and expansion of our service, offering our customers weekly reliability and new direct connections to and from Portugal, Spain, Canaries and North Africa to Liverpool. WEC Lines is committed to providing excellence in its products and customer service. Our partnership with Port of Liverpool is a key element of this development."* David Huck, COO at Peel Ports said: *"We are delighted to welcome WEC Lines' significant expansion of services into the Port of Liverpool. This multi-continental weekly service is a further vote of confidence in the port and the trans-shipment opportunities of these routes further expand Liverpool's global network and reach. Liverpool's location provides significant advantages as a more efficient and closer-to-end destination option, which reduces the road miles and congestion seen at other UK ports."*



Seen in Cammell Laird on the 28 Feb 2023 for repairs and maintenance following an Engine Room fire is STENA EUROPE. Built Gothenburg Sweden 1981 as KRONPRINSESSAN VICTORIA and joined Stena in 1997 A RoRo Passenger ship, 24,828grt, IMO 7901760 with a capacity of 1400 passengers and room for 480 cars with a service speed of 19 knots. She has been the regular vessel on the Rosslare /Fishguard route but is to be replaced in July 2023 by STENA NORDICA, which is undergoing a comprehensive refurbishment in Gdansk with an increase in passenger capacity.

STENA EUROPE is reported to be advertised as an Accommodation vessel after she leaves the route in July. (David Pointon)

On Thurs 7 March HEBRIDEAN ISLES of Caledonian MacBrayne arrived on the Mersey and entered dry dock at Cammell Laird. This was not an arranged refit but she needed attention to one of her propulsion units which had been keeping her out of service for several weeks. She was noted in the Wet Basin on Tues 21 March. It was noted on Mon 27 March that HEBRIDEAN ISLES left the Liverpool Dock system and re-entered dry dock at Cammell Laird, Birkenhead, to repair her steering fault. This had developed a few days earlier when she was conducting sea trials in Liverpool Bay.

### **New Green Ammonia Terminal For Liverpool**

Stanlow Terminals, part of Essar Oil UK, will develop an open access import terminal for green ammonia at the Port of Liverpool it was announced in early March. The terminal will be an expansion of existing facilities at Tranmere Oil Terminal and will contribute to Essar's ambition to be a major low-carbon energy innovation hub and global production leader. The new facility will benefit from competitive geographic location, deepwater access and maritime infrastructure that is capable of handling the largest gas vessels. The terminal will also benefit from direct connectivity with Hynet, the UK's premier low-carbon hydrogen project in terms of scale and speed to market. Feasibility studies are currently underway, and the terminal is currently scheduled to begin operations in 2027.

Michael Gaynon, CEO of Stanlow Terminals, commented: *"This new terminal is the latest milestone in our commitment to lead the UK's low-carbon transformation. By investing in new energy infrastructure and building a secure green ammonia supply chain in the UK, we are leveraging our expertise in bulk liquid storage and blending to put the northwest economy at the forefront of the UK's energy transition to net zero."*

Claudio Veritiero, CEO of Peel Ports, said: *"We welcome Stanlow Terminals' investment. Liverpool's strategic location means it is perfectly located to support the energy transition with projects like this."*

### **A Final Visit**

On Fri 17<sup>th</sup> March, HMS ENTERPRISE, the Royal Navy survey vessel, paid a visit to the Mersey and berthed at the Cruise Liner Terminal Berth. This is likely to be her final visit as she is due to decommission at the end of March. She departed on Mon 20 March.

### **A First Visit**

The French Destroyer AQUITAINE (D650) arrived on the Mersey on Tues 21 March for a courtesy visit. She berthed at the Cruise Liner Terminal. She departed during the morning of Fri 24 March. She is a Multi Purpose Frigate, home port being Brest. She was built in Brittany and was commissioned into the French Navy in 2015. She is the lead ship of her class, - FREMM, a joint French and Italian project.

### **Another Warship**

Duke Class Frigate HMS PORTLAND berthed at the Cruise Liner Terminal during the morning of Sat 25 March and departed on Mon 27 March.

**April 2023**

## **FRANCE-HAYHURST**

Ken Dodd's widow, Lady Anne Dodd, has donated a significant sum to help enable the tug FRANCE-HAYHURST to be lifted from the riverbed on Tuesday in a move which will see the entire dock drained. Owner of vessel Cathy Roberts says the donation, made through the Ken Dodd Charitable Foundation, has been fantastic.

Cathy adds: *"The donation from her is so fantastic, and it's the difference between saving the boat and not."*

FRANCE-HAYHURST sank on 2 Jan 2023 after being moved from the Royal Albert Dock ahead of travelling across the Mersey for a hull inspection. The cause of the sinking remains unknown but Cathy says the focus must now be on raising her and repairing her.

The first stage of the operation is to drain the dock and, once the water gets to a certain level someone will get on board her and they will put pumps on which will start to pump the water out to take the weight and strain off the lines which will be lifting her. Once as much water is drained out as can be, the contractor who's overseeing the raising will identify where there might be any leaks and plug them. The dock will then slowly be refilled and the wheelhouse will be removed from the vessel so she can be towed through the dock system and under the bridges to hardstanding at Coburg Dock. It's there where, after cleaning off the barnacles and mussels, FRANCE-HAYHURST will be assessed before restoration can begin.



**FRANCE-HAYHURST after being raised. (Dave Crolley)**





**French Frigate at the CLT, Liverpool on Fri 24 March 2023. (David Pointon)**

During the evening of Easter Sunday 9 April two rare visitors arrived on the Mersey. The first was the Seismic survey vessel *SANCO SWIFT* which berthed alongside the cruise terminal. The other was *STENA SUPERFAST VII* normally employed on the North Channel between Cairnryan and Belfast, which entered No.5 dry dock at Cammell Laird.

### **May 2023**

*HEBRIDES* arrived on the Mersey about 1230 on Mon 1 May and entered the Liverpool Dock system through Langton Lock. *HEBRIDES* owned by Caledonian MacBrayne had sailed overnight from Lochmaddy, North Uist. She usually sails out of Uig to Lochmaddy and Tarbert (Harris).

*QUEEN MARY 2* arrived at Liverpool at 2300 on Wed 3 May and berthed at the Cruise Liner Terminal. She was on a special and hastily arranged, Coronation Cruise from Southampton to Liverpool and back with two or three days at sea. She was berthed at Liverpool until 2300 on 4 May. The cruise was sold out.



**Cunard Line's QUEEN MARY 2 at the Cruise Liner Stage, Liverpool on 4<sup>th</sup> May 2023. (Adrian Sweeney)**

**Below: VIKING NEPTUNE, Liverpool, 16 May 2023. (Peter Head)**





# Royal Albert Dock Sold

The Royal Albert Dock has been acquired for around £40m. It was marketed in July last year with a valuation of approximately £49.25m. CBRE Investment Management appointed London agency Joiner Cummings to find a buyer for the site, which celebrated its 175th anniversary in 2021. London creative real estate developer and investor, General Projects, and investment management company, neo capital, are the new owners in a deal announced on the 9<sup>th</sup> May.

The 375,000 sq ft dock is made up of the largest single collection of Grade I-listed buildings in England and comprises mixed-use accommodation providing restaurants, bars, shops, two hotel and a collection of SME offices, within four landmark heritage buildings. Since it first opened in the 1840s as dock warehouses for global trade, it has undergone significant repurposing and regeneration to transform it into one of the UK's leading commercial leisure and cultural assets. The dock now welcomes about six million visitors per year.

General Projects will seek to implement a strategy of creative activations and public realm improvements to enhance the site's public offer and enable it to reach its full potential.

Working with local independent operators, the complex will continue its evolution into one of the most exciting experiential destinations in the UK with new restaurants, bars and leisure concepts set to join the estate in the coming years. A diverse programme of events and activations will bring new pop-ups, concerts and activities to the campus.

General Projects holds a wealth of experience in transforming the potential of heritage properties. The developer is the current custodian of the former Woolworths HQ in Marylebone, the historic Heal's department store on Tottenham Court Road and the former Walworth Town Hall in Elephant & Castle, all of which are being sympathetically refurbished and restored into vibrant new mixed-use hubs.

## New Warehouse at Alexandra Dock

Work is to start shortly on a new £28m warehouse at the Port of Liverpool. Construction of the 240,000sq ft building at Alexandra Dock for Peel Ports was due to begin at the beginning of June. The new facility will be the length of up to five football pitches (400 metres) and used for the handling and storage of cargo at the port. It will be able to store a variety of commodities, both unitised and non-unitised requiring indoor storage. The site will also have 300 metres of dedicated quayside.

David Huck, chief operating officer at Peel Ports Group, said:

*"We're very pleased to be announcing the construction for this major purpose-built space at the Port of Liverpool. We've seen a significant increase in demand for warehousing, and this huge new facility provides an opportunity for new customers looking for capacity to grow their business, as well as allowing existing customers the chance to expand their operational capacity at the port. This also represents a very important milestone for Peel Ports Group, enhancing both our warehousing and distribution offerings while enabling more sustainable port-centric solutions. We've long argued the benefits of the Port of Liverpool's central location, and this new facility will also provide real cost, carbon and congestion supply chain benefits to the market."*

The project is expected to be completed in April 2024 and the work will be carried out by construction company Glencar.

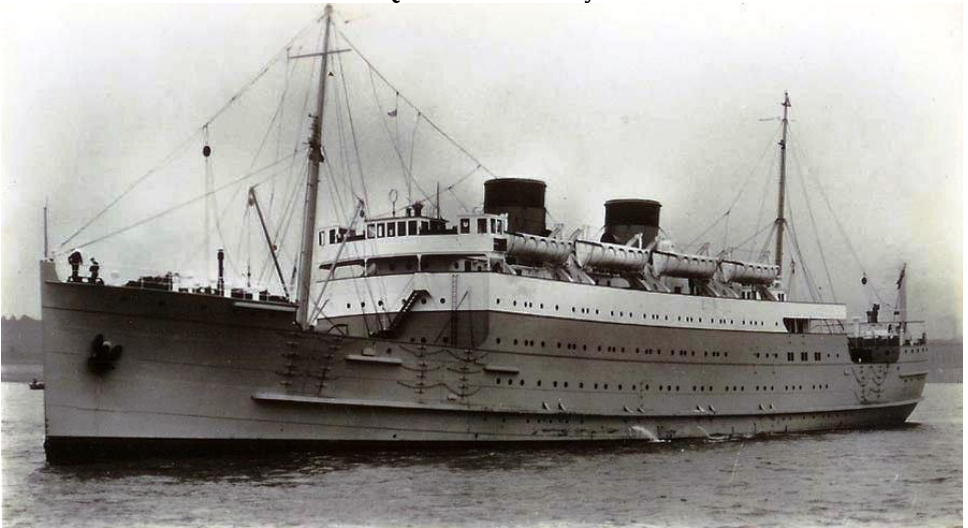
# **A Tragic Merseyside Connection – T. J. Hughes and ULSTER QUEEN**

## **Dave Crolley**

TJ Hughes is one of the most iconic department stores in the UK. In the 100 years since the first store was opened in Liverpool, its success has been a testament to founder Thomas J Hughes. Mr Hughes' hard work and vision helped turn the company into the iconic department store it is today. However, what many people don't know is that Mr Hughes died in dramatic and tragic circumstances.

First set up on London Road in 1912 with five shop assistants, within 20 years it had grown into one of the city's biggest department stores with over 400 staff. In 1933, over 20 years after establishing his first store, it appears Thomas J Hughes's mental health declined, with some speculation it was not helped by the stress of overwork. It was reported on April 14, 1933, while aboard a ship sailing to Belfast, the businessman took his own life by climbing on a rail surrounding the ship's stern. He is then said to have shot himself before his body plunged into the Irish Sea, never to be found. The ship he was sailing on was the Belfast Steamship Company's motor vessel ULSTER QUEEN and the incident took place when the vessel was a few miles south east of the Isle of Man. Although ULSTER QUEEN stopped and a prolonged search was carried out, the body of Mr. Hughes was never found. He left a widow and three daughters. Mr. Hughes, about twelve months before, had more or less retired from the business as his health had deteriorated due to overwork. It is thought that continuing stress caused him to take the action that he did.

**Below: ULSTER QUEEN on the Mersey in the 1930's.**



## Mersey Pictorial

### Photos and Information Courtesy of David Pointon



Above is SANCO SWIFT which arrived at the Cruise Liner Terminal at Liverpool on the 9<sup>th</sup> April 2023 from Florø in Norway. She is a research ship specialising in seismic operations.

Below is SINDRE KNUSTEN which arrived at Tranmere on the 10<sup>th</sup> April from Sturø in Norway and departed on the 11<sup>th</sup> April for Skagen in Denmark. She is an LNG fuelled shuttle tanker.





The above photo shows PROTEUS, TIDERACE and NORBANK in dry dock at Cammell Laird, Birkenhead.

PROTEUS is the former TOPAZ TANGAROA and she was bought by the M.O.D. for £70 million from Topaz Marine. She was built as an Offshore Support Vessel but, once converted, will serve in the R.F.A as an underwater surveillance vessel specialising in seabed warfare. She will act as a 'mother ship' for semi- submersibles.

TIDERACE is the second of the Tide class Replenishment Tankers and NORBANK is the P&O passenger/cargo RoRo Ferry normally employed with her sister NORBAY on the Liverpool – Dublin service.

# The Daniel Adamson In Her Working Years On The Manchester Ship Canal

By Colin Leonard

Ex MSC Tugman 1963-1989 / Current DAPS Volunteer

The DANIEL ADAMSON was bought together with her sister tugs **\*\*WE DORRINGTON** and **LORD STALBRIDGE** from the Shropshire Union Company in 1922 who was in turn owned by the London and North Western Railway Company. She was originally named the **RALPH BROCKLEBANK** after the managing director of the LNWR.

During the World War I the **RALPH BROCKLEBANK** (as she was known then) was taken into the Admiralty under Pennant T11 and we think operated around the Mersey Approaches. She was given a major overhaul in 1936 and renamed the **DANIEL ADAMSON** after the first Chairman of the Manchester Ship Canal Company and that is when her art deco saloons were fitted. She was bought to assist ships in the Ship Canal as well as an inspection vessel for customers and potential businesses to bring trade into the Manchester Ship Canal up to early 1963. Nearing the end of her Towing Career in late 1950's and following the arrival of more powerful diesel tugs the Danny was left to handle smaller vessels i.e., **Prince Line**, small timber carriers and tankers such as **FRAGUM** and **IRISH HOLLY** and even on occasions towed **Rea's** Barges.

The Danny was based at Old Quay Runcorn, which was the main repair yard for all floating craft on the Manchester Ship Canal. She had crew accommodation for seven. She only operated during the summer months from 1963 onwards, she did not have a regular deck crew, but all the engineers were permanent for the summer season. The deck crew who were from the Traffic Tugs were rostered to man the Danny for each cruise.

The crew consisted of Master, Mate, 2 x Deck Hands (AB's), Chief Engineer, Second Engineer, and Fireman.



*The Danny taking coal*

Before the first cruise of the season, we would fill the coal bunkers with Welsh steaming coal, (she held 24 tonne) and then before every sailing they would be topped up by the engineers and the Old Quay Yard Gang. We also took water – 5 tonnes for her aft tank, 5 tonnes fore peak tank and the boiler holds about 16 tonnes. These were replenished after every cruise.

Her routine was leaving Old Quay Runcorn the day before a cruise at 10.00 am – sailing light to Salford where we moored up overnight. As we sailed up the canal the crew washed the boat down, top to bottom, polished the brass work and arranged all the seating in readiness for the sailings next morning. Once we moored up in Salford some of the crew enjoyed the delights of the many pubs in Salford (which was nicknamed the Barbary Coast) and the more

adventurous made their way up town to Manchester. After a few drinks they would return to the boat and turn into their bunks in readiness for the next day's cruise.





When we arrived in Manchester, we berthed at East end of 7 Dock and the next morning the caterers (from the company Butlers Catering) would board, their role being on the way down to Runcorn, to serve drinks and light snacks.

We then moved the Danny to 6 Dock to embark the passengers at 1000. Once the guests were on board, we let go to make our way down the canal. Donald Redford the MSC Chairman would mingle with the passengers and organised a game of deck golf with a bottle of whisky for the winner whilst the caterers were serving them drinks. Although the MSC Company employed thousands of staff Donald always seemed to remember everyone's names.

The passengers included VIPS from all walks of life such as Prince George of Denmark, Sultan of Zanzibar, King Faisal of Iraq, King Fuad of Egypt and in later years General Eisenhower's second in command, Sir Arthur Tedder and the great Australian Batsman Don Bradman, and customers and potential customers of the canal. Staff were also treated to a cruise after several years' service, depending on which department they worked in.

The company **Philmac Oil Ltd** (whose vessel PHILMAC VENTURER was a regular visitor to the QE Oil Dock at Eastham) chartered the Danny every summer to give their workforce a cruise on the Ship Canal.

It must be noted that one of the councils on the upper reaches employed a lady to meet the Danny at every lock with a stopwatch which was timed to ensure we did not emit excessive smoke for more than three minutes. The passage down the canal was timed to arrive at Bridgewater House at Runcorn at about 1315 where the guests disembarked for lunch which included the famous 'Bridgewater Trifle'. The crew were also treated to lunch but not the same as the guests but did include the 'trifle'.



After lunch, the Danny left for Eastham where upon arrival the passengers disembarked and once, they had all left, we then made our way back light to Old Quay at Runcorn, arriving there after another successful cruise about 19.00 and over the two days we burnt approximately 6 tonnes of coal.

When the cruising season was over the Danny would be towed to Manchester Dry Docks for its Annual Inspection. On arrival back at Old Quay – outside contractors E D Williams would be employed to paint her from top to bottom.

### *The Danny approaching Eastham Lock*

The reason the Danny was laid up in September 1984 was because the decline of shipping in the upper reaches and the announcement by the MSC company to close the top end of the canal. In the last couple of years prior to this and because of the above, most of the cruises were from Eastham to Bridgewater House at Runcorn but ironically the last one planned for the 10<sup>th</sup> of September 1984 was cancelled as we were sailing into the docks the day before to moor up for the night, we were informed on the RT that the cruise was cancelled with no explanation given.

We returned to Old Quay and moored up not knowing that this was the last time that she would sail for the company. We found out later the reason it was cancelled was because the company heard



that due to the Miners' Strike taking place at that time there were plans to trap the Danny in one of the locks on the Upper Reaches to support their cause.

In 1984 – 1986 she was laid up at Old Quay

March 1986 she was towed to Ellesmere Port Boat Museum who were acting as custodians for it by the MSC Victory.

In 2004 the company decided to scrap the vessel. Mersey tugman Dan Cross heard of her plight and persuaded the company to let him form a core of volunteers to bring her to Liverpool for dry docking to see what the condition of the hull was, and luckily there weren't any major problems. The number of volunteers increased which meant they could set about preventing any further deterioration and later restoration which included the engineers stripping down the engines.

In 2014 she was moved to the Albert Dock, where she was on show to the public while we waited for the result of our Lottery Application to be granted. Whilst we were there, we had over 13,000 visitors on board.

In February 2015 we were awarded £3.8m lottery grant and she was taken over to Cammell Laird to be completed which included a refurbishment of the boiler.

In May 2016 we came out of Cammell Laird and following our launch we started river and dock trials and when they were completed, we started cruising on the River Mersey, Manchester Ship Canal and River Weaver, which we are continuing to this day.

*\*\* WE DORRINGTON Built 1906 - broken up 1937 at Preston by T. W. Ward Ltd. In 2021 the Preservation Society was kindly donated the original bell in from the WE Dorrington by the Kenyon Family who had been keeping it safe in a barn on a farm in Devon.  
LORD STALBRIDGE Built 1909 - sold to W J Guy, Cardiff, renamed 'The Rose' – and broken up at Briton Ferry 1959*

## **80<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Battle of the Atlantic Commemorations By Dave Crolley**

The BOA80 Commemoration events took place on the Liverpool Waterfront over the weekend of the 26 to 28 May 2023. The vessels that arrived to represent the Navy were HMS DEFENDER (D36) Daring class Type 45 Destroyer, FS BRETAGNE (D665) Aquitaine class Frigate and USS RAMAGE (DDG61) Arleigh Burke class Destroyer. The Merchant Navy was represented by the Trinity House lighthouse tender PATRICIA. HMS DEFENDER and FS BRETAGNE were both berthed on the Liverpool Cruise Terminal, PATRICIA was berthed in Canada No. 1 Dock and USS RAMAGE was tucked away where nobody could see her on the West Side of Royal Seaforth Dock. At 11.00 hrs on the Friday morning HRH the Princess Royal was a guest of honour at a service of commemoration at St Nicholas Church to acknowledge the sacrifice of thousands of UK and allied sailors involved in the Battle of the Atlantic, both merchant and military. After the service the Princess Royal unveiled a new Battle of the Atlantic Memorial and Garden of reflection in the church grounds, the first of its kind in the UK.

On the Saturday morning Shipbuilders Cammell Laird over at Birkenhead invited members of the public to take a rare behind the scenes bus tours around their shipyard which proved to be very interesting and successful. During the whole weekend Battle of Britain Memorial Flights took place over the river flying planes such as a Lancaster, Swordfish, BBMF Poseidon, Hurricane's and Spitfire's which was very spectacular. Also during the weekend a Military themed Village appeared at the Pier Head with many displays by the Royal Navy, RAF and Army.

On the Sunday morning there was a Drumhead Service with H.M. Royal Marines Band at Mann Island. This was followed by a Veterans March of Medals Parade from Exchange Flags around the city ending at the Liverpool Cruise Terminal. At 1700 hrs there was due to be a Sail away of all visiting vessels present but unfortunately that didn't quite take place due to what was described as a 'miscommunication'. However the Patricia did depart and local vessels tugs put on a spectacular water cannon display in mid river opposite the Pier Head.

FS BRETAGNE eventually sailed at 0900 hrs and HMS DEFENDER sailed at 1800hrs on Tuesday 30th May. USS RAMAGE also departed at 2000 hrs. All in all it was a very successful event helped by very good sunshine weather throughout the weekend.



**Above is the French Frigate BRETAGNE at the CLT.  
Below (top) is HMS DEFENDER and Below (Lower) is the "sailaway salute."  
All photos by Dave Crolley.**

