

# ***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**



**Tug/tender DANIEL ADAMSON on the Mersey on April 28 heading for Eastham Lock.  
(John Luxton)**

# ***Mersey Log***

Summer Issue 2021

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 2019/2020/2021**

Chairman: Adrian Sweeney

Vice-Chairman: John Luxton

Hon. Secretary: Dave Crolley

Hon. Treasurer: John Williams

Outside Visits Secretary: Dave Crolley

Committee Members: Geoff Holmes, Stan McFerran.

## **Editorial**

Welcome to the final printed issue of Mersey Log. From the next issue, Volume 57 No.1 Autumn/Winter 2021/2022 the journal of the Merseyside Branch of the World Ship Society will be issued in digital format only. The reasons for this change were set out in the last issue, Volume 56 No. 2 and we hope that our members will embrace the new format just as they have embraced the digital version of Marine News for the last few years.

So that future issues of Mersey Log can be sent out to our Branch Members, it is essential that John Williams, our Branch Treasurer, has your current and up to date e mail address. Our journal will be sent out by John in much the same way as Marine News and as the months progress if your e mail address changes please make sure that you inform John so that you will be able to continue to receive the magazine.

## **Meetings to Resume**

**All being well our monthly meetings will resume on Tuesday September 14<sup>th</sup> at the Seafarers' Centre at 1900. The speaker will be Branch Member Phil Welsh and his subject will be Cammell Laird Shipbuilders Ltd, Birkenhead. Seating will be more spaced out than was usual before the pandemic and face coverings will be optional. Admittance to the presentation will be £2 for members and £3 for guests. It is essential to have an idea of the numbers attending so if you know that it is likely you will be attending could you e mail our secretary, Dave Crolley stating as such. We look forward to seeing as many members as possible on the night.**

## **Branch News with Dave Crolley**

The Branch was very sad to learn that on June 16 the late Don MacArthur's widow, Eileen MacArthur passed away after a long illness. Our thoughts and prayers go out to Michael, her son and the rest of the family at this sad time.

## Request for Information

The well known maritime author Richard Clammer been researching into a small shipyard which operated at Sudbrook on the Severn Estuary between 1887 and 1922. The yard was set up by T.A. Walker who is best remembered as the contractor for the Severn Railway Tunnel. He built Sudbrook village to house the workers engaged on building the tunnel and, as soon as that was completed, he set up the yard to provide employment and build vessels for his other contracts. These included the Manchester Ship Canal and Buenos Aires docks. When he died in 1889 the yard was run firstly by his executors and later by his nephew, Charles Hay Walker, who was also a major contractor. The yard specialised in building steam hoppers, tugs, barges and coasters with the odd sailing ship thrown in for good measure. Many of the vessels were steamed across the Atlantic to work on the South American contracts, but others were built for UK owners. Several came to the Mersey.

He is trying to locate photographs of the following vessels:

**Alpha**, Steam Hopper, 1890, O.N. 98154. Sold to the Manchester Ship Canal Co in 1891. Sold to W. Cooper & co in 1939 and converted to a cargo vessel. Broken up at Preston 1962

**Beta**, as above. ON 98920, Built 1891. Sold to MSC co in 1893 and to Vectis Transport, Portsmouth in 1950 and renamed **Lypta**.

**No.12** Steam hopper, ON102102, built 1893 for the Mersey Docks & Harbour Board. 1901 became **No.1** for the Furness Railway Co, Barrow. Scrapped 1929

**No.13**. Steam Hopper, ON 102122, built 1893 for MD&HB. 1947 became **Mersey No. 13**. And in 1951 **Nora Cooper** for W. Cooper of Liverpool.

**Tulip**. Steam hopper/suction dredger, ON 109422, Built 1897 for Wallasey Local board. 1934 converted to a petroleum sludge vessel for Grayson, Rollo & Clover docks Ltd of Liverpool. Scrapped in 1964.

**No.19** Steam Hopper, ON 113371, built 1900 for the Mersey Docks & Harbour Board. . Sold in 1938 to R.G. Odell of London. Foundered 1952

**No.24** Steam Hopper, ON 115253, built 1901 for Mersey docks & Harbour Board. 1928 became **Moss Bay** at Workington. Scrapped 1972

**No.25** Steam Hopper, ON 115254, built 1901 for MD&HB. Broken up at Barrow 1927

There are also the coasters **PENWORTHAM** of 1892 which was built to operate between Preston and Liverpool; plus **DEANS GATE** and **MILL GATE** of 1898 both of which were built for the Manchester Coasting & General Shipping Co, and mostly traded from the Mersey ports.

If any members or readers of "Mersey Log" are able to assist Richard with his quest for photographs he would be enormously grateful.

Please contact secretary Dave Crolley or the editor if you can help.

## Mersey Maritime News Snippets

### April 2021

It was noted on Mon April 26 that RFA supply vessel TIDEFORCE (A139) returned to the Mersey and berthed in the wet basin at Cammell Laird.

On Wed April 28 tug/tender DANIEL ADAMSON exited the Liverpool Dock system through Gladstone and steamed up the Mersey to Eastham Locks and entered the Manchester Ship Canal and made her way to Sutton Weaver where she arrived about 1800. Her summer series of cruises, mainly on the River Weaver were due to commence in June.

### **New Steam Packet Terminal to Cost More**

The cost of building the new Isle of Man ferry terminal in Liverpool will increase by £5million it was announced by Isle of Man Infrastructure Minister, Tim Baker MHK, who provided the update after being questioned on the matter in the House of Keys on April 27. Mr Baker said costs and delays have happened following the need to remove unexploded World War Two bombs from the development site and protection for the seawalls from the thrusters on the bow of the new MANXMAN, currently expected to be in service by 2023. The minister also confirmed five percent will also be added on top of that for other reasons.



**Sten Fjell - 2010/13283 - Chemical/Oil Products Tanker - returning to Eastham from Estonia via the Kiel Canal - Norwegian owners/Gibraltar flag/ built in Shanghai. (Dave Pointon)**

### **May 2021**

#### **Nato Warships Visit**

Two Nato warships berthed at the Cruise Liner Terminal early on Wed May 5. The Danish Navy frigate HDMS ABSLAON (f341) and the Canadian frigate HMCS HALIFAX (FFH330) paid a courtesy visit before a Nato exercise in Scottish waters later in the month. They departed on Fri May 7.

## DKT Allseas Extends Far East to Liverpool Service

Following the success of its temporary supply chain critical services from Shanghai and Ningbo to Liverpool, DKT Allseas (part of Allseas Global Logistics) has announced, on May 6 2021, it will create further Far East services. In response to overwhelming demand, the first of the additional services has been scheduled for early May 2021 with plans to continue operating the service as a regular call in the future. The new initiative was launched by DKT Allseas at the start of the month to provide relief to customers facing increased ocean freight rates, as well as reduced reliability, as a result of knock-on effects relating to the global pandemic. Allseas has worked closely with Peel Ports to ensure it can offer its customer supply chain resilience, bypassing southern ports and move its cargo entry point to the Port of Liverpool, which is closer to its end destination. Its first three sailings will be operated at full capacity, from the Far East direct to Liverpool.

Darren Wright, Managing Director, Allseas Global Logistics said:

*"The early success of our China to Liverpool service, highlights the need of cargo owners for resilient, reliable and cost-effective supply chain solutions. Our first three sailings were completely sold out in short order and we have now fixed an additional 3 sailings and looking to introduce further services over the next few months, working towards a longer term frequent Far East service for our customers. The unique advantage of focusing on Single Port of Loading and Single Port of Discharge offers a more robust solution, especially for time sensitive goods as we mitigate the serious problems of Port Congestion, our aim is to fix longer term vessel contracts and close the transit gap to give rail freight a run for its money but at a much more cost effective proposition."*

Owner and operator of Port of Liverpool, Peel Ports has worked with Allseas since February to facilitate this new Far East service, which will offer greater reliability and competitive freight options for cargo owners. Port of Liverpool, along with its multi-million deep water container terminal Liverpool2 is well positioned as a viable call for Far East services and deep-sea lines. It offers close proximity to markets, creating a more reliable and sustainable way for cargo owners to get their goods to their end destination – a need which has been crucial during the last 12 months.

David Huck, Managing Director, Peel Ports said:

*"The success of the Allseas services, shows there is demand for a direct China to Liverpool service. We've worked closely with Allseas over the last few months, to provide a gateway from the Far East direct into the heart of the UK's cargo owning community. We've even been able to use our networks to introduce them to new customers who have previously expressed a desire to switch cargo to direct call services to Liverpool due to the reliability, resilience and cost benefits offered to their wider supply chain. Whilst this service accommodates the smaller feeder size vessels, our continued investment into our Liverpool2 deep-water container terminal also means we can handle some of the world's largest vessels and facilitate deep sea routes, strengthening our position as a viable call for Far East trade."*

## No New Mersey Ferries

Merseytravel confirmed on May 14 that it is committed to securing the long-term future of the **Mersey Ferries**, despite market pressures curtailing its procurement process for brand new vessels.

A spokesperson said:

*"The Mersey Ferries are a vital part of our world-famous heritage; visitor economy and public transport system and we remain totally committed to securing their long-term future. Our existing ferries are almost 60 years old and in need of a revamp. Our intentions are to breathe new life into our existing fleet, helping to secure their future for the next decade and beyond. While we are obviously disappointed to have taken the difficult decision to end the current procurement process following the latest round of bidding, we are making sure that they will still be around for*

future generations to enjoy. The procurement process was paused in autumn 2019, as the bids received were higher than the funding available and in view of the high level of uncertainty surrounding Brexit. This process was resumed before the second lockdown in August 2020 to test the market but unfortunately, prices have increased further, calling into question the affordability of the whole project. We would like to thank our suppliers for their interest and for working with us throughout the process. We are disappointed that the final solution bids were much higher than expected because of extraneous factors. The commissioned works at Seacombe Terminal and investment in the Eureka Mersey! project are continuing as planned, and along with plans for the significant refurbishment of the classic fleet, demonstrate our commitment to the long-term future of **Mersey Ferries**. We know for many, refurbishing the existing vessels, which form such great memories for the people of our region, will be seen as welcome news."



The tall ship ZEBU, which for many years has been resident in the Albert Dock or Canning Half Tide in use as a schools/training vessel, left the Mersey on Tues May 11 bound for Bristol. However she got into difficulties and was towed into Holyhead Port by the RNLI. On May 14 she dragged her anchor and ended up stranded on rocks next to the breakwater and ended up more or less on her beam ends when the tide receded and did

not right herself when high water returned, thus seriously flooding the vessel. Serious attempts were made over the next few days to salvage the vessel including removing her masts to help to lighten the ship prior to righting her. The intention was to take her out of the water and eventually put her on a low loader and take her by road to Bristol for further renovation. However fate took a hand during the day on Fri May 21 when Holyhead was battered by unseasonal storms resulting in Zebu being damaged beyond repair and being declared a constructive total loss .

ZEBU was originally built in Sweden and acted as a trading vessel, and it is believed that she may have helped with the evacuation of Jewish refugees from Denmark during the Second World War. The ship was later converted into a sail training and expedition ship. During the 1980s, the ship was involved in Operation Raleigh, a four year round-the-world expedition, in which thousands of young people were given the chance to play a part. From the late 1980s, the ship was based at Liverpool usually in the Albert Dock. Unfortunately she sank at her moorings during 2015, before being re-floated around six weeks later. She was later purchased again, and 'Community Interest Company tall Ship Zebu' was working to continue the ongoing restoration of the ship. They eventually hoped to turn her into a floating, mobile museum and educational platform, with the ability to take the vessel out to sea and navigate around the country; alas it was not to be.

## ROINA

The photo below, courtesy of Krispen Atkinson, is ROINA, departing the River Medway on April 24 2021. She is a small coaster (172gt) built in 1966 at the J R Hepworth Shipyard at Paull on Humberside for the London and Rochester Trading Company Ltd. She spent some time in the fleet of J J Prior from 2001 and was renamed NIGEL PRIOR but has been laid up in recent years. However she has now been bought by Jason Nicholls for service on the Mersey as a fleet mate to LOACH. Her passage to the Mersey was interrupted when she had to call in at Brixham to sort out a faulty fuel filter but by mid-May she was in Seaforth Dock waiting to start service for her new owner.

(Information courtesy of Coastal Shipping)



## June 2021

VIKING VENUS was back at Liverpool on May 31 and on Mon June 7.

## Largest Cruise Ship

Meanwhile the largest cruise ship yet to visit the CLT at Liverpool arrived on Tues June 8. MSC VIRTUOSA is 181,541grt, was built in 2020 at STX, St Nazaire. She arrived at 0600 and has a capacity of 4,888 passengers. She was due to leave at 1800 the same day but due to the Scottish Government refusing, at short notice, to let the ship proceed to Greenock to load passengers due to their Covid regulations, she stayed at Liverpool overnight and her Greenock passengers were bussed to Liverpool. (The editor is at a loss to understand why that was safer than allowing the ship to call at Greenock.)

MSC VIRTUOSA returned to Liverpool on Tues June 15 for a call during her cruise from Southampton and she overnighted at the CLT. She departed for Belfast during the evening of Wed June 16 but once again her scheduled call at Greenock was not allowed.



## STENA SCANDICA ex Stena Lagan



Above is the former Mersey favourite STENA SCANDICA, better known on the Mersey as STENA LAGAN. Stena Line took delivery of her on June 18 after her lengthening and she is now on the Ventspils-Nynashamn service, 36-metres longer! (Stena Line)

SIR DAVID ATTENBOROUGH in Canada No2 North July 7 2021 (Dave Crolley





SIR DAVID ATTENBOROUGH, which had been berthed for a few days in Canada Dock No. 2 after receiving attention at Cammell Laird, left the Mersey during the morning of Fri July 9, bound for Falmouth.

### **Tug Changes**

With suggestions that tug movements within the Boluda organization are afoot with the possibility that VB BARBADOS is leaving the Port her replacement arrived hon the Mersey on Saturday evening July 10 from Rotterdam. She is the Dutch tug PHOENIX, which used to be owned by Iskes Towage of Ijmuiden before Boluda took them over.

**Below is a photo taken of her by Dave Crolley berthed in Huskisson No.1 South on Sun July 11**



### **A Tug and a Floating Crane With Dave Crolley**

Below is a photo of the Griffin tug GT VICTORY and her tow from Runcorn to Newcastle. She left Runcorn at 1200 hrs on Sat July 17 and travelled along the MSC to Eastham emerging from there at about 1600 hrs, then out into the Mersey. She passed the Bar outbound at 1850 hrs. She was due at Newcastle July 25 at 1300 hrs. The photo shows her off Brombrough. For additional towage on the MSC she was handled by local tugs MSC VICEROY & MSC VIKING and then transferred to VB SANDON for a short time until she got out onto the river. The crane is, believe it or not, to be converted to a floating nightclub on the Tyne.



## **Liverpool 2021 Cruise Ship Calls – from July 1**

(All subject to change due to circumstances)

01 July 2021 Thursday BOREALIS TRANSIT  
 02 July 2021 Friday BOREALIS TRANSIT  
 04 July 2021 Sunday BOREALIS TRANSIT  
 05 July 2021 Monday BOREALIS TURNAROUND  
 06 July 2021 Tuesday MSC VIRTUOSA SPLIT VOYAGE  
 08 July 2021 Thursday BOREALIS TURNAROUND  
 09 July 2021 Friday ANTHEM OF THE SEAS TRANSIT – cancelled.  
 12 July 2021 Monday BOREALIS TURNAROUND  
 13 July 2021 Tuesday MSC VIRTUOSA SPLIT VOYAGE  
 15 July 2021 Thursday DISNEY MAGIC TURNAROUND  
 16 July 2021 Wednesday BOREALIS TURNAROUND  
 18 July 2021 Sunday DISNEY MAGIC TURNAROUND  
 19 July 2021 Monday BOREALIS TURNAROUND  
 20 July 2021 Tuesday DISNEY MAGIC TURNAROUND  
 22 July 2021 Thursday BOREALIS TURNAROUND  
 23 July 2021 Friday DISNEY MAGIC TURNAROUND  
 24 July 2021 Saturday BOREALIS TURNAROUND  
 25 July 2021 Sunday GOLDEN HORIZON TURNAROUND  
 27 July 2021 Tuesday DISNEY MAGIC TURNAROUND 28 July 2021 Wednesday CELEBRITY  
 SILHOUETTE TRANSIT

29 July 2021 Thursday BOREALIS TURNAROUND  
30 July 2021 Friday DISNEY MAGIC TURNAROUND  
02 August 2021 Monday DISNEY MAGIC TURNAROUND  
03 August 2021 Tuesday MSC VIRTUOSA SPLIT VOYAGE  
04 August 2021 Tuesday CELEBRITY SILHOUETTE TRANSIT  
05 August 2021 Wednesday ANTHEM OF THE SEAS TRANSIT  
06 August 2021 Friday BOREALIS TURNAROUND  
08 August 2021 Sunday CELEBRITY SILHOUETTE TRANSIT  
10 August 2021 Tuesday MSC VIRTUOSA SPLIT VOYAGE  
11 August 2021 Wednesday ANTHEM OF THE SEAS TRANSIT  
14 August 2021 Saturday BOREALIS TURNAROUND  
17 August 2021 Tuesday NIEUW STATENDAM TRANSIT  
18 August 2021 Wednesday MARELLA EXPLORER 2 TRANSIT  
20 August 2021 Friday ANTHEM OF THE SEAS TRANSIT  
23 August 2021 Monday BOREALIS TURNAROUND  
24 August 2021 Tuesday MSC VIRTUOSA SPLIT VOYAGE  
25 August 2021 Wednesday MARELLA EXPLORER TRANSIT  
26 August 2021 Thursday ANTHEM OF THE SEAS TRANSIT  
28 August 2021 Saturday BOREALIS TURNAROUND  
29 August 2021 Wednesday QUEEN ELIZABETH TRANSIT  
30 August 2021 Monday CELEBRITY SILHOUETTE TRANSIT  
31 August 2021 Tuesday MSC VIRTUOSA SPLIT VOYAGE  
01 September 2021 Wednesday P&O BRITANNIA TRANSIT  
02 September 2021 Thursday BOREALIS TURNAROUND  
03 September 2021 Friday ANTHEM OF THE SEAS TRANSIT  
04 September 2021 Saturday MARELLA EXPLORER 2 TRANSIT  
06 September 2021 Monday QUEEN ELIZABETH TURNAROUND  
07 September 2021 Tuesday MSC VIRTUOSA SPLIT VOYAGE  
09 September 2021 Wednesday P&O BRITANNIA TRANSIT  
11 September 2021 Saturday BOREALIS TURNAROUND  
12 September 2021 Sunday QUEEN ELIZABETH TRANSIT  
18 September 2021 Saturday QUEEN ELIZABETH TRANSIT  
21 September 2021 Tuesday ANTHEM OF THE SEAS TRANSIT  
22 September 2021 Wednesday P&O BRITANNIA TRANSIT  
23 September 2021 Thursday CELEBRITY SILHOUETTE TRANSIT  
26 September 2021 Sunday BOREALIS TURNAROUND  
28 September 2021 Tuesday MSC VIRTUOSA SPLIT VOYAGE  
29 September 2021 Wednesday ANTHEM OF THE SEAS TRANSIT  
30 September 2021 Thursday ANTHEM OF THE SEAS TRANSIT  
02 October 2021 Saturday CELEBRITY SILHOUETTE TRANSIT  
04 October 2021 Monday ANTHEM OF THE SEAS TRANSIT  
05 October 2021 Tuesday MSC VIRTUOSA SPLIT VOYAGE  
06 October 2021 Wednesday CELEBRITY SILHOUETTE TRANSIT  
07 October 2021 Thursday BOREALIS TURNAROUND  
10 October 2021 Sunday QUEEN ELIZABETH TRANSIT  
12 October 2021 Monday ANTHEM OF THE SEAS TRANSIT  
14 October 2021 Thursday CELEBRITY SILHOUETTE TRANSIT  
17 October 2021 Sunday ANTHEM OF THE SEAS TRANSIT  
18 October 2021 Monday BOREALIS TURNAROUND  
19 October 2021 Tuesday CELEBRITY SILHOUETTE TRANSIT  
25 October 2021 Monday CELEBRITY SILHOUETTE TRANSIT  
02 November 2021 Tuesday BOREALIS TURNAROUND

16 November 2021 Tuesday BOREALIS TURNAROUND  
02 December 2021 Thursday BOREALIS TURNAROUND  
07 December 2021 Tuesday BOREALIS TURNAROUND  
21 December 2021 Tuesday BOREALIS TURNAROUND

## **Peel Ports Take-Over of Mersey Docks 2005.**

**By Philip Parker**

Following the take-over, the port undertook several major changes that required investments on a scale not previously seen with Mersey Docks, several major projects including improvements to the gates on Gladstone lock and new equipment in the shape of tugmasters and straddle carriers replacing some of the oldest of the fleet to maintain the current levels of container business and for future developments.

The Seaforth Grain Terminal upgraded its handling equipment with the introduction of a Buhler Mechanical Ship Unloader late 2005/early 2006 at a cost of £3.6m capable of handling up to 1,800 tonne per hour (similar to the Buhler used on S2 berth for animal feed discharge) replacing the two marine towers that had been in operation since opening in the early 1970's.



**Above: Panamanian flag Bulk Carrier PAQUIS IMO 9324239 built 2005, 38,938 GRT, discharging a cargo of grain at S1 berth, 14.6.2017.**

One of the first major container customers to the port was China Shipping who along with CMA-CGM operated vessels on the North Atlantic corridor to the eastern seaboard of the U.S. . Other container business included the joint Zim/Evergreen service also to the U.S. east coast operating further south as far as Charleston, South Carolina.

MSC continued its growth with larger vessels on regular sailings, some of these with fellow operators Hapag-Lloyd and OOCL.

**Below: China Shipping/CMA-CGM Joint service. CSCL FOS IMO 9228540 built 2002, 30,024 GRT, docking at Seaforth assisted by Tugs Adsteam Waterloo & Gladstone 22<sup>nd</sup> July 2006.**



Peel produced a forward plan in early 2011 that had several innovative ideas which would change the face of the operational maritime side of the port and its associated property portfolio.

Probably the biggest single project to come from this plan was a river berth to be built on the area behind the West Gladstone berth and the lock and called Liverpool 2 with a cost of £400m, ten times the cost of Seaforth dock in the late 1960's.

The construction programme comprised of a new quay wall, then in-filling of the newly created land-mass, the dredging of a new 16.5m deep berthing pocket adjacent to the quay wall, with the installation of ship-to-shore quay cranes and cantilever rail mounted gantry cranes and associated supporting infrastructure works.

The idea of a river berth for the port was always the subject of great debate, could the vessels cope with the rise and fall of the tide and the famous westerly winds that often-caused vessels to cancel arrivals and sailings with the Gladstone lock being a concern for Pilots, Tugs and Vessel Masters in extreme weathers.

With Peel now firmly established the decision was taken to go ahead with the project, the major decision was would Liverpool survive in the long term with the limitations of Gladstone lock and remain as a small feeder type port with one or two larger vessels inside Seaforth or challenge the bigger ports such as Felixstowe, Southampton and London Gateway, the challenge was to convince the customers, freight forwarders, importers and the like to acknowledge the percentage of containers destined for the North West U.K. This did not happen overnight, and it has taken time for the shipowners to be convinced that Liverpool 2 was an option going forward.

The ground-breaking event was held at S7 berth in June 2013 when plans became public knowledge and tenders invited for several major civil engineering and construction plans released.

**Below: Photo of the outer wall looking north with construction near to completion in August 2015.**



**Below: Infilling the quayside area with sand excavated from the Crosby channel by Boskalis suction dredger HAM 316 IMO 9160449 built 1983 9760 GRT, anchored mid river pumping the Mersey sand ashore, August 2015.**





**Below: First cranes arrive in November 2015 on board ZEN HUA 23 IMO 8414738 built 1986 37,879 GRT (pictured) for positioning on the northern end of the quayside.**



As the Liverpool 2 works progressed another work in progress was the widening of the passage between Gladstone and Seaforth also in 2015, due in the main for the pending arrival of ACL's G4 class of vessels that fitted inside the lock with inches to spare the passage further ahead would be problematic as pre arrival the vessels could "rest" on the river wall prior to entry to the lock, vessels situated inside Gladstone dock had little room for manoeuvre before making towards the "cut". This £10m project also involved the reposition of several utilities underground, visible in the previous photo.

Other major changes included the building of a Biomass terminal on the north side of Gladstone branch No 1 with increased rail handing several trains each day between Liverpool and Drax power station in North Yorkshire.

Drax Power Station uses compressed wood pellets sourced from sustainably managed working forests in the U.S, Canada, Europe and Brazil, and are largely made up of low-grade wood produced as a by-product of the production and processing of higher value wood products, like lumber and furniture. Using chartered bulk carriers these are now a regular sight on the river and inside Gladstone branch number one.

**Below: Biomass August 2015 during construction of the marine towers at North 1 Gladstone branch dock.**



**Below: Biomass Terminal with Bulk Carrier ULTRA LEOPARD IMO 9758428 built 2016 43,036 GRT, discharging into the silo's 20<sup>th</sup> August 2017.**



**Below: GB Railfreight class 66 727 loading Biomass alongside the east end of Gladstone branch No 1. December 2019.**



The use of the Manchester Ship canal would also see increased growth in container traffic via barges and feeder vessels to Irlam (Port Salford) this designed to ease the traffic volumes on the local motorways, M57, M62 & M60.

**Photo: RMS VERITAS IMO 9138745 built 1995 2899 GRT, alongside S6 berth, one of the regulars on the Manchester Ship Canal Irlam service along with Irish and Scottish port calls.**



With the future of coal fired power stations being under much consideration the need for the Powergen Coal Terminal on south Gladstone No 1 was "mothballed" with the berth being used by deeper drafted scrap vessels. Following the official opening of Liverpool 2 on 4<sup>th</sup> November 2016 MSC committed vessel support in trials to test the new infrastructure.

**Below: MSC Jenny IMO 8709169 built 1988 39,980 GRT, alongside the river berth 22nd February 2019.**

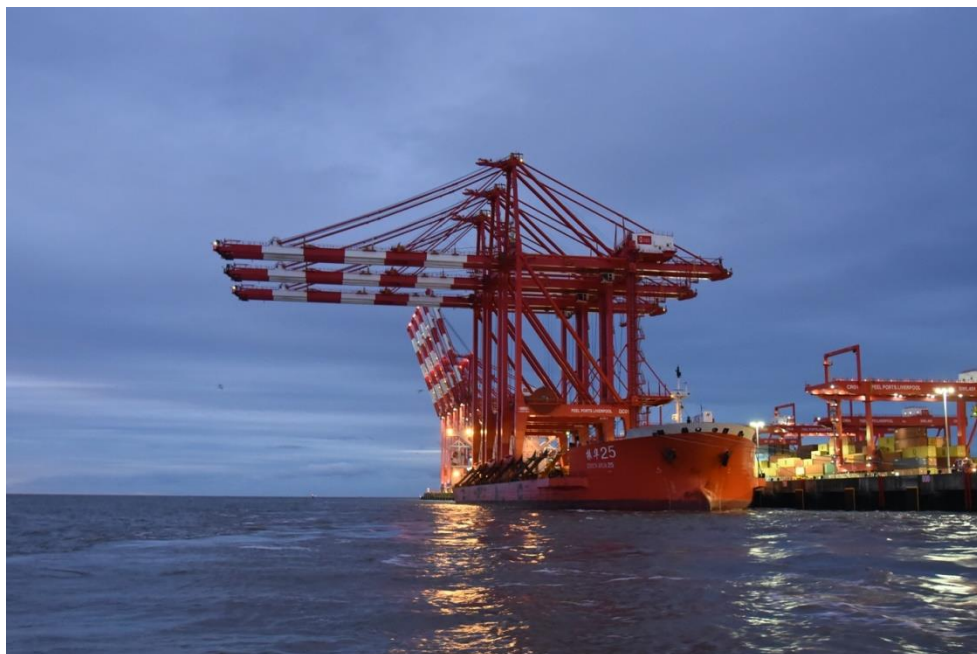


In May 2018 Peel Ports in conjunction with DB Schenker commenced operating container trains from Seaforth to Mossend in Glasgow and Daventry in the Midlands, the first container trains since Freightliner ceased their Seaforth operations in 2007.

**Below: The last three ship-to-shore cranes arrive in the Mersey on board Zen Hua 26 IMO 8700254 built 1988 24,865 GRT, inward in the Crosby channel on 2nd December 2019 and later the same evening alongside Liverpool T2 south with all eight cranes visible.**







In January 2020 Peel entered into a Joint Venture with Swiss based MSC's TIL (Terminal Investment Limited) with shares in the Liverpool 2 Terminal. Since its founding in 2000 TIL has grown to become one of the largest and most geographically diverse terminal businesses globally, with material ownership interests in 40 operating terminals and 1 development terminal in 29 countries on five continents.

There remains an option to develop phase two of Liverpool 2 with resurfacing and equipping the former west Gladstone berth currently in being used for the storage of Ford cars and vans imported from Belgium on Grimaldi/ACL vessels berthing at Seaforth S3.

Other interesting shipping developments included the Ro/Ro service with European short sea Ro-Ro specialist CLdN who have introduced a new call at the Port of Liverpool, opening the first pure RoRo service in a triangle trade between Santander (ES), Liverpool (UK) and Dublin (IE).

Earlier this year (March 2021) Peel Ports placed an order for two new Liebherr ship to shore container cranes for their facility at the Port of Liverpool, at the time of writing (July 2021) the cranes are under construction on site, these two cranes will replace two of the 1999 supplied Liebherr cranes which will be shipped to Peel Ports' Greenock Ocean terminal at Clydeport. It is expected that these new higher cranes will speed up the turnaround of ACL's G4 vessels with their high cell guides. To date the largest vessel to dock at Liverpool Two (now known as T2) was Maersk's MAERSK SEMBEWANG in May 2021, IMO 9315226 Built in 2007 with a lift capacity of 6648 TEU

**Below: Photo courtesy of Mike Mahon on approach to Seaforth.**



The long-awaited Isle of Man Terminal is nearing completion and should be in operation during the Spring/Summer of 2022. The artists impression below makes for an exciting future on the former Princes Half Tide Dock and the linkspan will be positioned on the old Waterloo Lock River entrance with vessels berthing port side to, bows south.

**Below: Artist impression of the proposed development. (IOM.Gov)**





The older more established parts of the port have had considerable capital expenditure these past years, these include modifications to Twelve Quays south berth to enable handling of the Stena E-Flex vessels via a double-deck ramp.

The automated steel terminal built at Gladstone in 2000 was relocated to Canada No.3 to make-way for the Biomass terminal.

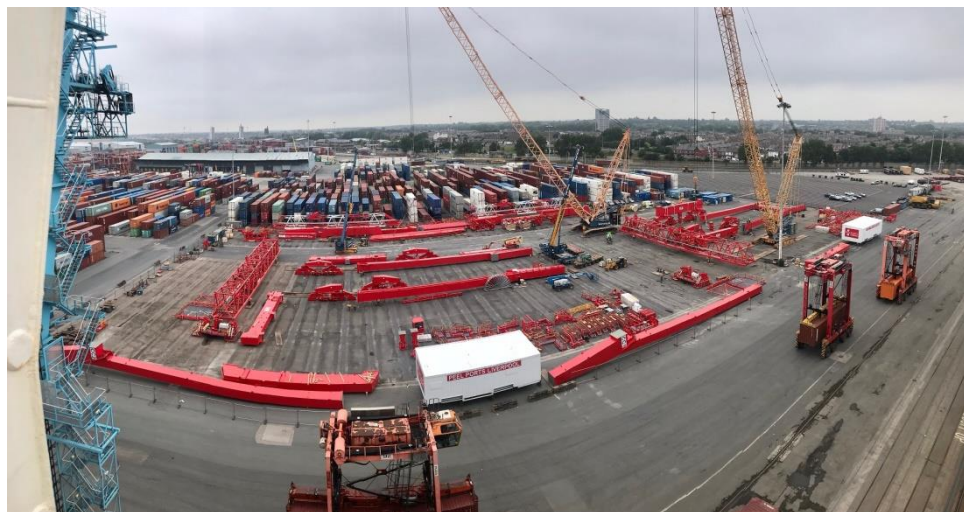
A new bulks terminal at Alexandra No.3, including a harbour mobile crane (initially used by Drax prior to opening of the main Biomass terminal at Gladstone). Extension of the ADM Arkady facility at Royal Seaforth, including a new Liebherr harbour mobile crane.

Major investments at the river entrances including Langton Lock (new outer caisson), QE2 gates at Eastham, Alfred Lock, Birkenhead and redevelopments at both Ellesmere Port and Runcorn.

The Peel group is rarely out of the news these days be it takeovers, land acquisitions, building developments or joint business ventures it has certainly made for an interesting time for maritime enthusiasts of all ages from a city with so much maritime history and traditions.

I look forward to when we are able to meet again in person.

And finally...Super wide angle photograph of the new "red" cranes for S3 Seaforth from Liebherr Cranes, in Ireland viewed from the deck of an ACL G4 vessel, these were discharged from the vessel SYMPHONY STAR IMO 9721645 during the last week in June 2021. Construction was then begun. Photograph by Lee Chapman ACL Seaforth. Produced with permission of Peel Ports.



## **Around the Docks on June 29 2021 With Dave Crolley**



**The German tug BUGSIER 3 which has recently been working on the river for Svitzer.**



**Now filled in, the former Canada dry dock is to be used by Norton Scrap**



**Canada No. 2 North – the sheds have recently been demolished**



**Huskisson No. 1 North where Boluda tugs berth – sheds also recently demolished**

## A Tid Tug



Photographed by Dave Crolley at Fiddlers Ferry near Widnes on the Sankey Canal on Thurs July 1 is the tug BONCHURCH which is on the Historic Ships Register.

Her details are as follows:

Ex: 1945 TID 174, 1947 ABEILLE No 13, 1963 BAIE COMEAU, 1966 BONCHURCH

TID-class (numbered from 1 to 183, no nr 13) (T.I.D.=Tug, Inshore and Dock)

Registered: LR66-67:541896

(GBR)ON 180480 /(FRA)brevet:70.278

54 GRT, 14 NRT, L21,87m(19,82), B5,49m, D1,836m(2,44) (71.0'(65.0'')x17.0'x7.4' or 71'0"(62'3'')x18'0"(17'0'')x5'11.1/2"(8'0''))

welded steel,

Machinery: 1 scr, C2cyl by "John Dickinson & Son Ltd" at Sunderland (first 90 coal fired, next oil fired) 220ihp, speed 8.5 knots

Re-engined 1962 diesel 2tew 8cyl (1943) GM Cleveland, 375bhp, speed 8kn

Re-engined 19xx diesel Cummins, 380bhp

TID 174

1945 -xx/10: Launched by "Henry Scarr Ltd" at Hessle (GBR) (YN S.482)

1946 -22/03: Completed for the UK MOT Ministry of Transport and laid up, mng "Townsend Brothers (Ferries) Ltd" (GBR)

(GBR flag, ON 180480, c/s GDDR)

1946: MNL listed as operated by "PLA - Port of London Authority" (GBR) (as were TID 159, 164, 165, 167-175)

1946: To the French Government (FRA)

1947: To "Compagnie de Remorquage et de Sauvetage Les Abeilles" at Le Havre (FRA), renamed ABEILLE No 13

1947 -06/03: Registered (FRA flag, regd Le Havre, brevet:70.278, c/s TWSK)

1962 -xx/12: Re-engined diesel 2tew 8cyl (1943) GM Cleveland, 375bhp, sp 8kn



1963: To "Sirespa Building Co Ltd" at La Baie (CAN), renamed BAIE COMEAU (GBR flag, 63 GRT, 0 NRT)  
 196x: Re-engined diesel 8cyl GM, 375bhp, by "Glebe Construction Ltd" at Southampton (GBR), then laid up in the River Hamble for sale  
 1966: To (Red Funnel Tugs) "Southampton, Isle of White & South of England RMSP" at Southampton (GBR), renamed BONCHURCH  
 1967: To "Red Funnel Tugs" group at Southampton (GBR)  
 1983: To "Pounds Marine Shipping Ltd" at Portsmouth (GBR) (shipbreakers)  
 1987: To "Marev Tugs" at Penryn (GBR)  
 1992: To "Lagan Marine Services" at Belfast (GBR)  
 1993: To "Tyne Towage" (GBR)  
 1998: To "Read Heavy Lift" (USA), but never moved  
 2002: To "Eveleigh (Griffin Towage)" at Southampton (GBR)  
 2002: To Shane Francis at Leigh on Sea (GBR)  
 2004: For sale  
 2005 -06/08: spotted on the slip at Ramsgate (GBR)  
 2005: Reported renamed BON CHANCE but it is possible this did not happen  
 2006: Spotted lying for sale at Weston Point (GBR)

### **BOREALIS**

The ex Holland America cruise liner ROTTERDAM, now owned by FRED Olsen Cruise Line and renamed BOREALIS, is shown below at the Cruise Liner Terminal the night before the occasion of her first cruise from Liverpool on July 5. She sailed for a cruise to the Scottish Western Isles including a call at Oban.



**Fred Olsen Line's BOREALIS ex ROTTERDAM at Liverpool on July 4 2021, (Dave Crolley)**

## **Tankers in Canada Dock – Photos by Simon Smith**



**AGNES VICTORY built in 2004. Owned by Champion Tankers of Norway. 27,257 grt.**



**PACIFIC MOONSTONE built in 2021, 30087 grt, Liberian flag.**



## Liverpool – China Direct by Simon Smith

The global pandemic has caused havoc with world-wide supply chains and the container shipping industry in particular. The situation was exacerbated by the grounding of the EVER GIVEN in the Suez Canal in March. Demand for more reliable transit times prompted DKT Allseas to market a China Xpress service linking Shanghai and Ningbo with direct calls to Liverpool.

The first service was operated by the multi-purpose vessel RONNIE. Launched in October last year RONNIE was delivered to HS Bereederungs GmbH & Co by her Chinese builders in April. She sailed from the Yangtze port of Taicang four days after delivery and after calling at Singapore's Eastern Anchorage arrived at Liverpool's Seaforth Terminal early on June 6<sup>th</sup>.

The vessels particulars include gross and deadweight tonnages of 11,494 and 12,325 respectively, a length overall of a little over 148m and a container capacity of TEU 869.

Additional calls followed with the similar multi-purpose vessels BBC RUSSIA (sailed Ningbo May 4<sup>th</sup>, arrived Liverpool June 8<sup>th</sup>) and BBC VOLGA (sailed Ningbo May 19<sup>th</sup>, arrived Liverpool June 29<sup>th</sup>). At the time of writing the slightly smaller (TEU 665) FESCO ULISS is due on July 7<sup>th</sup> to be followed by the BBC NORWAY which at TEU 1,497 will be the largest vessel to serve the route to date.



**BBC RUSSIA arriving at Liverpool on June 8 2021. (Simon Smith)**



**RONNIE, arriving at Liverpool on June 6 2021. (Simon Smith)**

## **Nostalgia Corner – Douglas Harbour 1952**

**Name the Steamers!**

