



# ***DLSRT News***



Spring 2011

***THE NEWSLETTER OF THE DUNKIRK LITTLE SHIPS RESTORATION TRUST***



## **The beginning of the rescue Caresana as viewed in August 2009**

### **Aims of the Dunkirk Little Ships Restoration Trust Registered Charity Number 1021088**

*The aims of the Dunkirk Little Ships Restoration Trust are :-*

**First, to acquire Dunkirk Little Ships in danger of destruction and remove them to a place of safety.**

**Second, to encourage the boatbuilding and conservation skills necessary to restore the Little Ships to a high standard with a view to ensuring their continued useful life.**

## Trustees report - Summer 2011

This has been one of the busiest, most important and exciting periods for the trust with a number of projects coming to fruition and others planned for the future.

Ever since we lost the use of the buildings at Marchwood in 2003 we have not been able to meet one of our prime objectives, namely “to encourage the boatbuilding and conservation skills necessary to restore Dunkirk Little Ships, maintain and operate them to ensure their continued working life.”

### New home

In the last report I said that we hoped to have the training workshop up before Christmas. This proved not to be possible, partly due to the weather in December and other problems all of which had to be overcome but not before Peggy and I left for New Zealand. I was grateful to hand over the reins to Len Lochrie with the hope that the workshop would be up and *Dorian* installed prior to our return in March. The building is for the use of all the members of the Aeronautica Organisation (see separate report). In practice this means the Tram Group which looks after the restoration of the old Southampton trams; as a result of this the City paid a large proportion of the cost of the building with the balance coming from us and Solent Sky.

### Long process

Through no fault of ours the erection of the workshop took much longer to organise than expected and it was not until March that the building was up still leaving the work of sealing the base, placing the outer fencing and gates and installing the electrics. The fencing went up and then the concrete sealing was done. Unfortunately there was some concrete left over so the workman decided to place this round the base of the gates covering the holding down bolts which gave considerable problems later. The electrics are being installed by Philip Jones, one of our volunteers, in his spare time and should be completed shortly.

The reason for wanting to get the building completed early was that we wished to move *Dorian* in before the main cruise (big cruise ships!) season started. We needed to be able to close the road whilst *Dorian* was moved into the workshop and this would be more difficult when the adjacent Ocean Terminal was in full use. Len rose to the occasion and after much hard work organising the lift at Chertsey, which is a very restricted site, transportation to Southampton and the offloading whilst balancing the needs of the cruise terminal a date was agreed.

### Official opening



We decided that we would make this the official opening of the workshop and to this end Peggy and I took *Tahilla* round and moored her alongside the new building and immediately below the Calshot Spit lightship. Catering for the event was organised by Jim Newman and Maggie Leckie and we invited our great friend, Dunkirk and D Day Veteran Lionel Tucker, to cut the ribbon which he did in great style.

The whole event was covered by BBC South Today and Meridian TV, organised by Paul Erlam, and later I was on Sir Robin Knox Johnston's evening radio show. As a result of the publicity a number of people got in touch volunteering to become involved together with previous owners who have been able to provide us with invaluable information and photos. We were helped on the day by Angela and Nigel Smith of the Tram Group who took some excellent photos, Alan Jones of Solent Sky and John Clark, chairman of Aeronautica.

Particularly welcome guests were Ken Cast of City College who brought two boatbuilding apprentices with him to show them the sort of vessel they would be working on and they seemed to be very enthusiastic, and WO1 Mick Gentry RN who is our particular and increasingly important contact with the Royal Navy which has resulted in the offer of a number of volunteers from the training division at HMS Collingwood to help with the restoration of *Dorian* with the object of her being used as a training ship for the RN and Sea Cadets.

She arrived safely after delays in loading and worries that *Dorian* might break into pieces on the motorway, needing Dennis Cox and Eric Pollard to follow her all the way.... But then we found that the vehicle could not get through the gate! After much deliberation and false starts she was eventually manoeuvred in but not before a few heart stopping moments. Our heartfelt thanks go to all involved particularly Terry Ollerton of the Transport Company, Blade Runner Shipping who provided the cranes for offloading, ABP for allowing us to close the road and providing much additional help.

Thanks are also due to Derek Abra of Little Ship Projects who carried out all the blocking thus ensuring that she has taken up her correct shape and who will also be involved with the restoration.

### **TV programme covering Dorian's restoration**

Following the screening of the arrival of *Dorian* Meridian TV are to make a series covering her restoration over the next four years and these programmes will form a part of the training program for future projects.

Sally and Peter Marsh were two of the volunteers who came forward and were given the task of clearing the ship of all the accumulated debris which we anticipated would take some time but they got stuck in and cleared her very quickly so that it is possible to see the extent of the job ahead. It was pleasing to find that it was not quite as bad as feared and certainly recoverable. The aim is to have *Dorian* fully restored by 2015 for her 100<sup>th</sup> birthday and the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Dunkirk whilst giving as much training to young people as possible. Replacing all the fittings is a major task and we have had a number of offers of items which are very valuable, in particular the offer of two marinised engines and gearboxes from David Murr.

### **Challenge to the Future**

March brought the long awaited news that the Heritage Lottery Fund had approved our Part 1 application for funds for the mechanical restoration of **Challenge** which is a very well deserved result for our team of Charles Payton, Clive Purser and Jason Lowe. They have already spent hundreds of hours on this initial proposal and now face many more refining it and expanding it to have the Part 2 application ready to be submitted before December. This includes producing a range of no less than thirteen plans and reports including ten year income and expenditure forecasts, maintenance, partnership funding, which Martin Summers has well in hand with 50% already pledged, etc., etc. Although the part 1 funding covers some of the costs of bringing in professionals they in turn rely on the input from our team. An initial meeting was held on Challenge with Lucy Perry of The Heritage Lottery Fund and Wynn Davies the Monitor appointed by them and this will be followed by regular contact to keep us all on track.

### **Home base**

Whilst the "Challenge to the Future" plan envisages her visiting a number of ports every year her home port will be Southampton and the Aeronautica site. This is starting to come together with the arrival of the *Tug Tender Calshot*, the *Calshot Spit Lightship* and the operational workshop we now have a major presence on site and plans are now progressing to push ahead with the maritime side as soon as possible. The artists impression of the site done by

Scott Beadle will give an impression of how it may look before too long with the Tall Ships basin being used by the Jubilee Sailing Trust and other tall ships and for water based events.

Depending on funding we would hope to complete this part of the scheme over the next two years at which time the site would be fully open to the public, watch this space!

### **News of other Little Ships and Events**

After a long series of negotiations with the owner of **Caresana** we were able to agree that the Trust take her over. With the help of Tom Lawrence, she has now been moved from the beach at Leigh on Sea to a slip at Small Gains Marina on Canvey Island for a thorough appraisal and bottom preparation prior to being moved upriver to Dennis Cox at Shepperton for the restoration work. An initial inspection of the engines by Dennis Stanfield is encouraging with no obvious defects although it was not possible to start them as the batteries are dead. Dennis Cox reports that there has been a worsening in the condition of the superstructure since his last visit two years ago when serious negotiations began. He says Tom Lawrence (*Dowager*) and Dave Powell (the yard owner) have been very helpful.

In May we were invited to Runnymede on the Thames to an event organised by our Vice President, Donald Longmore and the Rolls Royce Enthusiasts Club to raise funds for a number of charities of which we are one. This resulted in some 350 Rolls and Bentley cars of all ages being present together with a working RR Merlin engine which was started at regular intervals to make up for the very quiet car engines! A number Of Dunkirk Little Ships were present as were the Bournemouth Dunkirk Veterans. We had the stand in a big tent on site and helped by Di and Dennis Cox and Eric and Sandy Pollard had quite a successful day with the shop.

### **ADLS Commemorative Cruise**

The Commemorative Cruise of the ADLS was held in Ramsgate this year and we were delighted to see **New Britannic** launched after all the major work on the hull had been completed. She has been put back to a varnished hull which looked very smart. Congratulations go to Greg McLeish on getting her back afloat, which many thought was impossible. He has a new engine ready to install and he says that the interior will take no time at all as she was an open boat! We were delighted to meet up with the new owners of **Lamouette** and to see the work that they are doing to bring her back up to scratch. Good news also of **Rania** with Simon Jones reporting that work is well under way with a section of the keel replaced, floors added and the engines removed. She now has to move to a new location but Simon is confident that she will be ready for the Return in 2015.

## About our new Little Ships

Although some people will be quite familiar with the Trust's new acquisitions it seems appropriate to introduce them to our wider membership.



**Greg McLeish and *New Britannic***

Whilst in the area we called at the Deal Maritime Museum to look at the ship's boat from *Southend Britannia* which went to them after our exit from Marchwood. We were disappointed to find the museum closed due to a legal dispute and were given to understand that the boat has not been well looked after. We have written to the museum and hope to bring her back to the workshop for restoration.

We have heard recently that *Lucy Lavers* has been transferred to a new Trust called Rescue Wooden Boats and it is hoped that work on her will start in the near future.

*Fermain V* now has a new life with a reversion to her original name of *Silver Queen*. She also sports a very smart fixed awning over the aft deck and a toilet!

All our projects - buildings, restoration of *Challenge*, *Dorian* and *Caresana* will take a vast amount of work as well as administrative back-up.

If you are interested in getting involved in any way including secretarial, fund raising, archives, shop etc. etc. and, of course restoring, please do not hesitate to get in touch we would be delighted to hear from you.

Jerry Lewis

*Since this report was compiled we have to report that Secretary to the Trust Diana Cox has become unwell and is unable to continue her present role in the Trust.*

*Peggy Lewis is filling in pro tem. We would be happy for offers of assistance or take-over!*

Peggy's address is [jerry.lewis@care4free.net](mailto:jerry.lewis@care4free.net)

Please will anyone who has not supplied an email address please, please do so? It is so helpful for contact etc..

### ***Caresana***

*Caresana* is an RNLI Lifeboat built in 1933 by Groves and Gutteridge of mahogany on oak. Length - 41ft, beam - 12ft 3ins, draft - 3ft 8ins, displacement 15.66 tons and originally fitted with twin petrol engines. She was based at Dungeness. The *Charles Cooper Henderson* is said to be Britain's longest serving lifeboat with 43 years of service. *Caresana* as she was renamed on sale out of service in 1977, has had at least three owners since.

The Trust has now acquired her after a two-year long negotiation with her most recent owner. Like any Little Ship that does not receive appropriate care, maintenance and use she shows signs of deterioration which will require time and effort to overcome.

### ***Dorian***

*Dorian* is a 42ft Admiralty pulling launch built at Portsmouth in 1915 of teak on oak. She was bought in 1937 by a private owner who converted her for cruising and extended her stern by three feet. In 1939 she was then commandeered by the Admiralty for the duration of the war.

The black and white photo in the centre spread shows an earlier 1896 pulling launch with crew similar to *Dorian*.

She has had a chequered career slowly moving from loved cruiser across France and the UK to houseboat with seized engines to a hulk ashore when the Trust took her over.

More history about her is being found (and sought!) to amplify both her naval career and subsequent civilian activities.

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**Please don't forget.....**

**The DLSRT AGM!**

**Sunday 2nd October at Aeronautica - come!**

**ADLS Events**

**Thames revival 10th and 11th September**

**Laying Up Supper  
22nd October**

**and keep 3rd June 2012 free for a huge  
Thames spectacular for the Queen.**

## Dorian's travels from Shepperton to the new workshop at Aeronautica



Waiting for a lift



Provenance!



Up in the air



Down onto the transporter



Quickest she's ever travelled



Outside the new shed



Double lift



Ever so gently



Almost there



At last!

Four very relieved people



1896 photo of similar pulling launch.

Count the crew

New Britannic at Ramsgate

In the water at last thanks to Greg McLeish



## Aeronautica at Southampton



Sketch by Scott Beadle

For many years past a number of heritage organisations based in the Southampton area have recognised the need for a site where their various interests could be shown to the public and the process of restoration, maintenance and operation could be taught. After a number of false starts, at Marchwood, Woolston and the Royal Pier and many months of wasted effort we believe that at last we have the ideal solution.

During this time steps were taken to form the Southampton Heritage Federation which is an umbrella organisation for all groups and individuals in the Southampton area to represent their views to the City and County Authorities, the Press and the public at large and to work together to further their interests.

### Generous offer

Members of the foundation have a wide range covering maritime, aviation, trams, local history, cemeteries, under water archaeology, the Bargate etc. under the chairmanship of Alan Jones of Solent Sky. Thanks to a meeting between Alan and Doug Morrison, Port Director of Associated British Ports (ABP) it was suggested that a site encompassing the remains of the old Grade II listed Trafalgar Dry Dock and Number 50 Berth could be made available to the Federation for reclamation as a heritage site. This generous offer was taken up immediately and plans were put in hand to move in some of our assets as soon as a lease was in place.

This has now been achieved with the *Calshot Spit* Light Vessel (1913), tug Tender *Calshot* (1929) and Dunkirk Little Ship *Dorian* (1915) on site and the training workshop erected and in use. The aim now is to create an educational visitor attraction which will help to ensure the future viability of the various vessels, aircraft, trams and other artefacts belonging to our members whilst giving the general public an exciting, entertaining and educational experience. The whole project will be known as Aeronautica and will encompass aircraft with the planes of Solent Sky placed in a new building over the old dry dock and the Spitfire Tribute being planned by the City Council. On land will be the Southampton trams which, once restored in the training workshop, will run a service linking the site to Town Quay.

### Visitor Centre and Tall Ships

On the water will be the historic vessels SS *Shieldhall*, housing the Port Information Centre, Tug Tender *Calshot*, with the visitor centre aboard, Dunkirk Little Ship S.T. *Challenge* and ex. *HMS Medusa* of D-Day fame. All these are members of the National Historic Fleet (the top historic vessels in the country) and together with other important vessels they will surround the Tall Ships basin which will be the base for *Tenacious* and *Lord Nelson* of the Jubilee Sailing Trust and other training tall ships.

We then move under the water for a diving training and educational outreach centre for the Hampshire and IoW Trust for Maritime Archaeology operating from a base on the restored *Calshot Spit* Light Vessel.

It is hoped to have the maritime side fully operational within the next two years and the overall project complete in about five but this is subject to a number of factors some of which are outside our control.

### ***Leaving a Legacy to the Restoration Trust***

*There are many ways by which one can choose to leave a legacy to the Trust. Some methods are more tax-efficient than others and if you choose to remember the Trust in your will please take appropriate advice. Gifts to charity are exempted from Inheritance Tax and can make a significant reduction in your overall tax liability.*

*Trustee Simon Palmer's speciality areas are wills and charities. He is happy to speak to anyone wanting advice on their will. He also offers 10% discount on his fees if his firm then acts on their behalf.*

*Whichever method you choose, the Trustees wish to thank you in advance for your consideration.*



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The pictures above need no explanation - 2 years have passed since the picture on the front page was taken.  
Bottom right - Dennis just wants to get moving!