



DLSRT News

Autumn 2012



THE NEWSLETTER OF THE DUNKIRK LITTLE SHIPS RESTORATION TRUST



After part of *Dorian* taking shape in the workshop at the end of August 2012

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.

DUNKIRK LITTLE SHIPS RESTORATION TRUST

Charity No. 1021088

Dunkirk Little Ships
presently in the care of
the Restoration Trust

Undergoing restoration now

Challenge - 110ft Steam Tug built
1931, supported by The Heritage
Lottery Fund. Presently at
Aldrington Basin, Portslade.

Dorian - 45ft. ex RN pinnace built
1915 in Portsmouth, now at
Southampton.

Caresana - 41ft ex R.N.L.I. lifeboat
built Cowes 1933, presently at
Shepperton.

Saved and in new ownership

Cyril and Lilian Bishop
Restoration, France.

Endeavour
In commission, Leigh-on-Sea.

Fermain V (now Silver Queen)
In commission, River Thames

Gay Crusader
Now in Norfolk

Irma
Preserved, Donington Park.

Lucy Lavers
Restoration, East Anglian Coast.

New Britannic
In commission, Ramsgate.

Nydia
Preserved, Donington Park.

Rania
Restoration, Cumbria.

Resolute
Restoration, Glasgow.

Southern Queen
In commission, South Coast.

Patron

HRH Prince Michael of Kent GCVO

Trustees* and Officers

Jerry* and Peggy Lewis

The Cottage by the Lake
Chilling Lane
Warsash
Southampton SO31 9HF
01489 572775 (Home)
07785 318602 (Mobile)
jerry.lewis@care4free.net

Charles* and Liz Cave

Rudge Farm
Cambridge Batch
Flax Bourton
Bristol BS48 3QS
01275 462774 (Home)
079 8944 9046 (Mobile)
charles.cave@talk21.com

Charles Payton*

Home Farm
Burrowbridge
Bridgewater
Somerset TA7 0RF
01823 698330 (Home)
078 6025 4706 (Mobile)
charles_payton@yahoo.co.uk

Martin Summers*

2, Clover Mews,
London SW3 4JH
020 7352 8535 (Home)
020 7351 4912 (Fax)
077 7023 2121 (Mobile)
martin@martinsummers.com

Simon Palmer*

The Friars House,
Matfeild,
Kent TN12 7LG
01892 724453
thadeus@btopenworld.com

Clive Purser*

11, Longfellow Road,
Worthing,
West Sussex BN11 4NU
01903 214368
pursers@ntlworld.com

Hon. Secretary:

Mrs. Peggy Lewis,
Address above

Membership Secretary
Mrs. Margaret Kerr

2, Albert Close,
Royal Victoria Country Park,
Netley Abbey,
Southampton SO31 5GZ

The DLSRT News is published by
The Dunkirk Little Ships Restoration Trust.

Registered office: The Cottage by the Lake, Chilling Lane, Warsash,
Southampton SO31 9HF
Company No: 2778637

Hon. Editor:

John Slater, Silver Stream Hackney Road Melton Woodbridge Suffolk
IP12 1NN 01394 383527 slatpack@intamail.com

Editorial contributions:

Please send to Jerry Lewis, The Cottage by the Lake, Chilling Lane,
Warsash, Southampton SO31 9HF
Tel: 01489 572775 jerry.lewis@care4free.net

Advertisements:

Please contact Jerry Lewis or John Slater, addresses above.

Printed by:-

Colourplan Print and Design, 20, Wharfedale Road, Ipswich, Suffolk IP1 4JP
Phone: 01473 400379. Fax: 01473 400810 info@colourplanprint.co.uk

Challenge update

As has previously been reported, the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) made a grant of just over £900,000 at the end of March for the restoration of *Steam Tug Challenge*. The main areas that needed to be addressed and for which the HLF grant was allocated, were:-

- A full hull survey including steel thickness measurements
- Extensive repairs to the main propulsion train, including the propeller, the tailshaft and bearings and the stern tube seal.
- Repairs to the rudder and steering quadrant.
- Re-metalling of the main engine bearings.
- Removal and replacement of the main boiler.
- Installation of new fresh water and sewage tanks.
- Overhaul of most of the auxiliary equipment.
- Installation of new diesel generators.

However this list is not comprehensive and there are many other items that will have to be attended to before the restoration is complete early next year.

The work formally started on the 1st April when the vessel was moved (in driving rain and gale force winds) to the dry dock in Shoreham Harbour, a move which enabled the initial hull survey to take place and various items including rudder, pumps, anchors and cables etc. to be removed in order to allow refurbishment by Larssen Engineering who are our main contractors (the propeller and tailshaft were removed several years previously). Following the initial one week in the dry dock, *Challenge* was then moved to a new location at Aldrington Basin where for the first time for many years a full working area (including two 20ft storage containers) could be established on the quay alongside the ship.

Speedy start

Within hours of arrival at her new berth work was underway on the removal of the funnel, top deck, masts etc. in order to allow unrestricted access to the boiler room below. Once cut free, these items were stowed safely on the quay while the comparatively slow process of removing the old boiler commenced. With over 40 tonnes of steel to cut into handleable pieces, the flame and plasma cutting work carried on for nearly three weeks and in the process consumed vast quantities of cutting gases.

Funnel out, deck off and the work begins!



Although speed was of the essence, care was taken to establish any parts that could be re-used and some sections of the old boiler were saved from the scrapman and will be used on the tug *Calshot* for display on her original (non operational) boiler.

Once the old boiler was out of the way, the remaining equipment in the boiler room was removed for storage or further attention; this allowed the whole internal area to be hydroblasted to remove decades of filth, scale and corrosion. During this process several pin holes appeared in the ship's side which required the urgent application of cement in order to temporarily stem the ingress of water. The various removals resulted in the tug riding very high in the water and in order to counteract this and to set her up for the next dry docking, the fore peak ballast tank was filled with water. At this point it was discovered that the Forward collision bulkhead was much thinner than originally thought and needed patching with fibre glass just to keep water from flooding the chain locker.

It was in this very patched-up and tenuous state that *Challenge* moved back to the Shoreham dry dock on Wednesday 29th August for just over three weeks of frenetic activity. The refurbished propeller and shafting, rudder, anchors and cables were returned and installed; badly corroded hull plates were cut out and renewed; the forepeak virtually re-built from the bottom up; the sea valves were overhauled or renewed and the whole underwater part of the hull was hydroblasted and re-painted.

Once again the dry dock was flooded and *Challenge* was moved safely back on her berth in Aldrington Basin (a passage again made in foul weather). Quickly there followed a series of crane lifts which saw the installation of the two new diesel generators, the refurbished boiler feed water tanks and, as the *piece de resistance*, the new boiler itself.

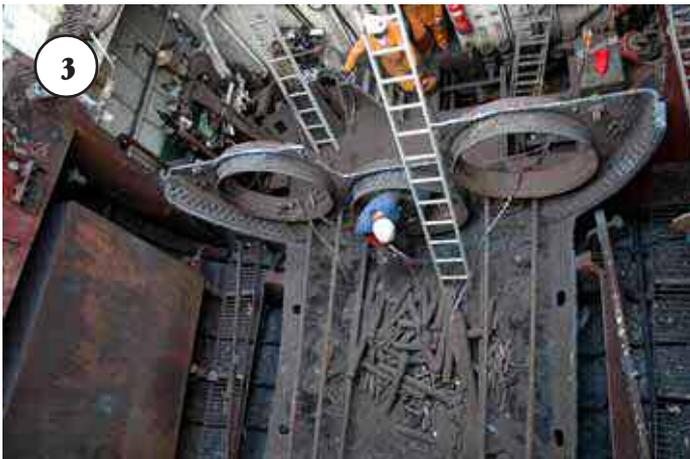
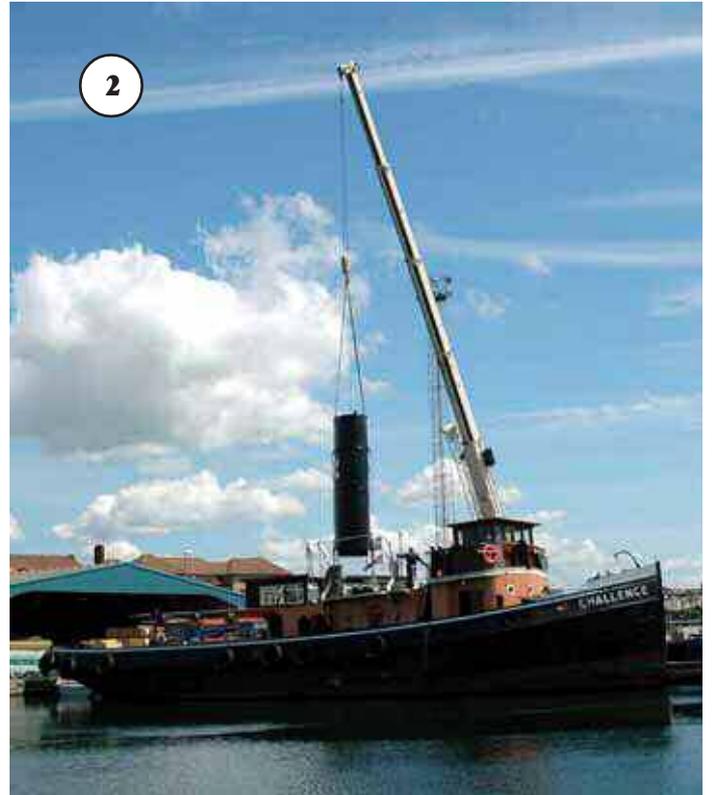
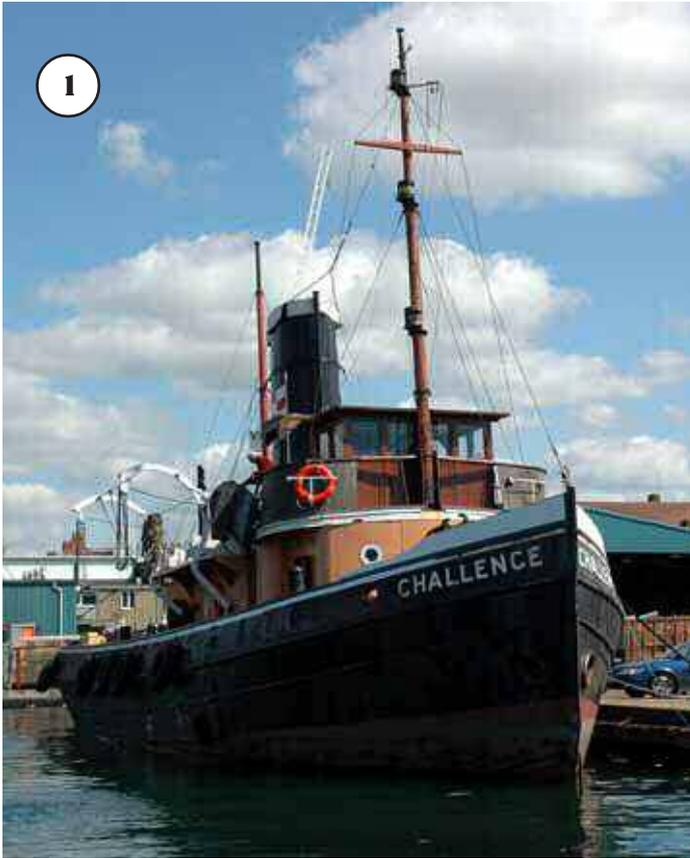
More crane lifts

The new boiler has been designed and built specifically for *Challenge* by Byworth's of Yorkshire and will double the efficiency of the old boiler, thus allowing the fuel costs of running the ship to be dramatically reduced. The boiler fitted perfectly onto its new supports and, as it takes up far less space in the boiler room than the old boiler, will allow a large area to be set aside for both storage and a visitor display.

(I understand that the new boiler will have a steaming capacity of about two thirds of the original boiler - but about the same as the old one's recent ability! - Ed.)

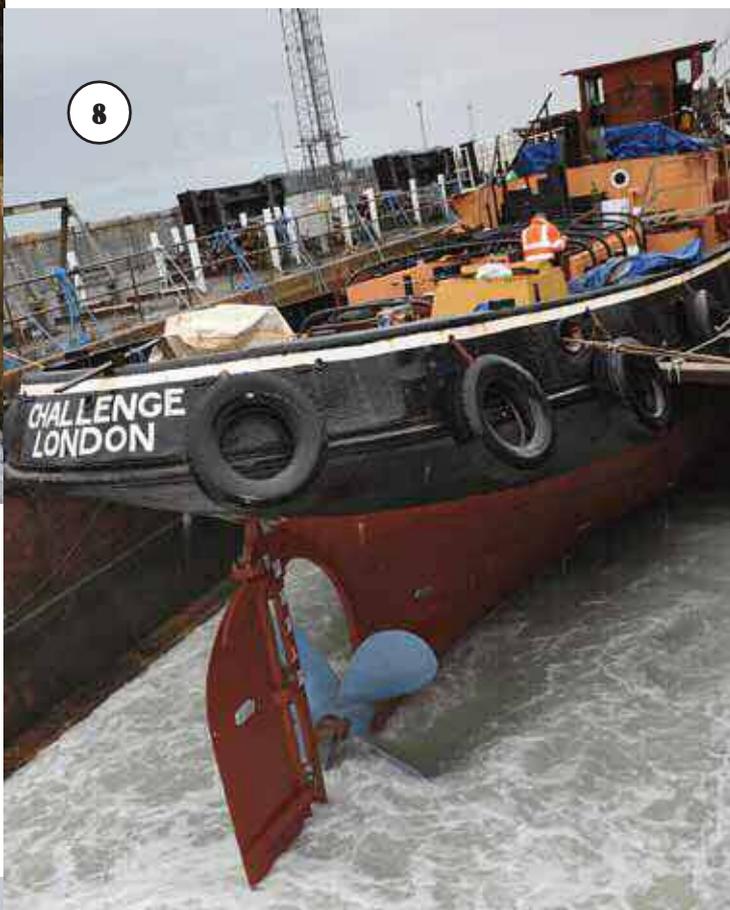
Work will now continue for the next seven months to further restore all of the original machinery and complete the seemingly endless series of tasks necessary to bring *Challenge* back to life once more.

DLSRT Trustee Clive Purser, who has spent every waking hour for the past two years working on *Challenge* as both the project leader and Chief Engineer, is delighted with the support given to the project not only by the wonderful team of dedicated volunteers who turn out in all weathers and do whatever is required, but also the team from Larssen Engineering who seem to work 24 hours a day 7 days a week and never complain (well, not much!).



- 1 - Alongside her new berth, April 2012.
- 2 - Funnel off first, then the deck over the boiler.
- 3 - Nearly three weeks of cutting, just a little left of boiler.
- 4 - Dry-dock, the chain gang at work!
- 5 - New boiler at Byfords.
- 6 - Tail shaft, stern seal and propeller on.
- 7 - Rudder fitted, antifouled and anodes installed.
- 8 - About to move back to floating berth.
- 9 - Boiler hangs above.
- 10 - It's settled - perfectly!





Stop Press!
Heritage Day
We understand that there is a possibility that the Heritage Day planned for May 6th could be extended into two days - 5th and 6th. Keep the dates free & update yourself on the Challenge website www.stchallenge.org.uk



Trustees Report Autumn 2012

By Jerry Lewis

I said in my last report that, following the award of our Heritage Lottery Fund grant, “the hard work really begins” and that has proved to be the case. The bulk of the work has fallen on Clive Purser who has almost taken up residence on *Challenge* whilst she has been torn to pieces around him but there has been plenty for all the team to do.

The start

The work started with a trip to the dry dock in Shoreham where a full survey of the hull was carried out, the rudder, propeller and shaft removed and the resulting hole blocked off so that she could be refloated and moved to her new berth at the far end of Shoreham Dock. There the serious work began. After removing the masts and funnel, and cutting off the superstructure, space was created to prepare for the cutting up and removal of the old boiler, water tanks and removal of other machinery in order to prepare the space for the new boiler.

The removal of all this weight meant that she was floating very high in the water and the forward ballast tank had to be filled with water to help bring the bows down. She has moved back into the dry dock for about three weeks for the shaft, propeller and rudder to be reinstalled, each having had extensive work done on them. It is a really good feeling to be starting the reconstruction.

Whilst the heavy engineering is being carried out by Larssen Engineering much of the remaining work is being done by our team of over twenty volunteers led by Peter Evison and they are clocking up over four hundred hours a month. (A full report on the progress is elsewhere in the newsletter.)

While the physical restoration has been going on the other part of the Lottery bid is to cover the cost of producing an activity plan and the interpretation plan which involves how and where she will be based and how the public can be attracted to come and visit to ensure that *Challenge* can be kept running for the foreseeable future.

Home Port and Events

Southampton will be her home port, but she will make an annual voyage from there for about two months to other ports around the coast of the UK, France, in particular Dunkirk and Brest, and Holland. The first year is likely to include Dover, Gravesend, London, Ipswich and Lowestoft. The details are being worked on by Charles Payton and have to be coordinated with all the various authorities at each site to try to fit in to local events to maximise the number of visitors and share publicity costs.

The first event will be her arrival in Southampton on Monday 6th May when a Heritage Open Day is being planned with the blessing of ABP, the Port owners and the Southampton Heritage Federation which represents *S.S. Shieldhall*, *Tug Tender Calshot*, *ex HMS Medusa*, buses, trams and, of course our own workshop. The event will be open to the public. **Please make a note of this date in your diary!** We would welcome offers of help in organising both prior to and on the day of May 6th.

It was felt that, in view of the limited numbers that can be entertained on board at any one time together with the fact that people with physical disabilities would find it almost impossible to move around the ship, a shoreside structure was required where the public could be introduced to the tug and her history and see videos of her activities. The structure and all the displays would have to be moveable and be capable of being stored on board as she moves from port to port.

After some discussion it was agreed that a robust tent would be required which would give a useable space of thirty feet by ten feet which will contain three large stands, a video stand, flip books and a counter for the display of items from the shop. All this was delivered just in time for the Lepe event in July.

Lepe Event and a trial run

On the Friday Dennis Cox joined Peggy and I and we loaded his Land Rover, our camper van and car with all the gear and hundreds of books to sell and we set off for Lepe where we met Nik Boulting of RWDP who organised the purchase of the tent and stands.

The very incomplete instructions and video, which we had watched, promised that the main structure would take ten minutes to erect but with four of us it took two hours by which time it was raining hard! We eventually managed to get all the stands and stock sorted and finished at nine pm. In the morning it was raining even harder and the forecast was for it to continue all day and most of the next with winds increasing to gale force. Reluctantly we then dismantled it all and went home to dry everything out which took four days. A very useful training exercise!

The new web site for *Challenge* is now up and running with thanks due to Bob Long who put in many hours to achieve a site which has already had many compliments, if you have not looked at it yet please log in to www.stchallenge.org.uk.

Other Little Ships

Back in the workshop the work on *Dorian* has been going on apace, with Derek Abra and Len Lochrie leading the team of volunteers. Nearly all the forward deck beams are complete, the main bulkhead in place and major work under way on the stern section. Meantime Sally has been stripping and painting the interior. We now badly need an engine. (We have a preference for a Gardner 6 cylinder 105 h.p.). Help in locating one at a price that we can afford would be welcome as would more volunteers either to do the work or to help in organising the project and opening the workshop to the public.

As a break from the work the volunteers had a day out on *S.S. Shieldhall* to watch the J Class racing in the Solent, these are the large racing yachts built in the 1930s by the very wealthy to compete for the America's Cup. We had a great day out and the sight of these ships racing hard in strong winds was fabulous.

It was also good to have some time with the crew of *S.S. Shieldhall* as we will be working closely with them on the education program when *Challenge* comes to Southampton.

Dorian progress since June

Clockwise from top right

Looking forward from bulkhead.
Sides reframed ready for planking.
Looking aft.
Painstaking fit of diagonal planking.
Working on the stern.
New bulkhead.
Aft deck beams.
Also - see report



Caresana progress

Clockwise from left

Caresana settled at Dog Ait before covering.

Internally she was a mess.

Note the hole in the superstructure.

Eric gets a well earned IPA.

More to remove.

Mechanicals to be refurbished..

Also - see report



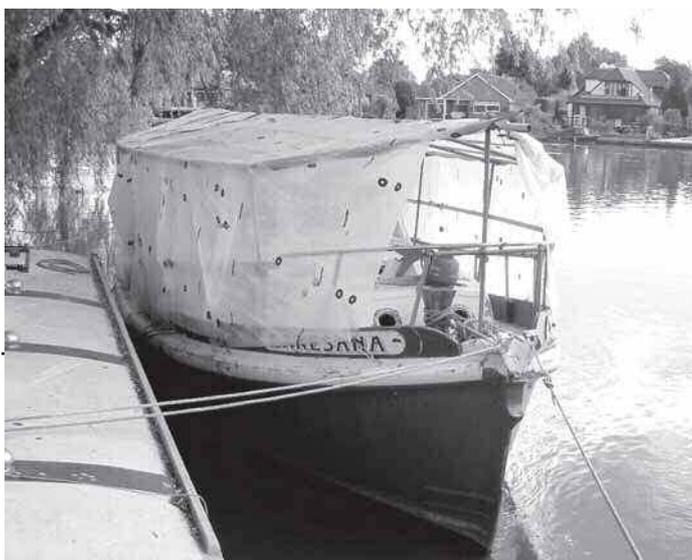
News from *Caresana*

It is quite a shock to realise that it is nearly a year since *Caresana* arrived here at Dog Ait. A lot has happened on board in that time, but not as much as we would have liked.

Our first task was to design, construct and fit an overall cover as water was still entering through the superstructure, preventing us from drying out the interior. Fortunately Dennis Cox had some 2" diameter scaffold poles which made up the framework and a stock of polythene tarpaulin material which created the tent, so by the end of November the rain no longer dripped on your head down in the forward cabin.

Drying out

To aid the drying out process we had intended to light the stove in the galley but realised very quickly that the stove was completely rusted through. The *Challenge* team were able to loan us a stove and after some work with Den's angle grinder we soon had smoke issuing from the chimney and a much snugger boat to work in. This combination of warmth and the cover has dried out the structure very well.



The cover in place

When she arrived, *Caresana's* fore and aft pumps ran fairly regularly but slowly the periods between pumping has stretched so that it is now unusual to hear them run. The centre, engine bilge, has never leaked at all. Altogether a wonderful tribute to the skill of her builders and the standard of the materials they used; we are now almost sure she has not had any major rebuilding of the hull. The engine room bilge was filled to a depth of several inches with a muddy sludge and this has now been removed allowing us to examine the complexity of the pipework down there and see what does what.

Outdated Electrical gear

One of the other major tasks has been removing all the electrical gear. The lights were 12v fluorescent tubes, most of which were broken, so they came out together with all the wiring. The electronics fit was so old the radar was the

size of an old 22" television and the log and echo-sounder the spinning rotor types. Because the wiring is all over 30 years old we have decided it will be quicker and easier to do a complete refit rather than try to utilise any of the old, so any cables spotted have been removed.

Superstructure to renew

The lockers in the cockpit were in a sad state, in fact the plywood structure of one had completely delaminated so they have been stripped right out. The latest job has been to remove all the deck fittings on the superstructure. Handrails, ventilators, hatch and tabernacle have all been taken ashore and the window frames are now held in with a few strategically placed screws. This has been done as *Caresana* will soon be going to the Messer Brothers at Windsor to have a completely new superstructure fitted.

Bank-side income

Whilst Den and I have been doing the messy bit the rest of the team have been very busy fund raising. Sandy has made jam from all the fruit we could get the neighbours to donate; Keith has produced batch after batch of marmalade and a neighbour, Alison, has donated her home made chutneys. All this has been sold from a stall on the towpath by the boat and has altogether raised over £800 this summer, an amazing amount.

Eric Pollard

Dorian News

from Sally Marsh

The change in *Dorian's* stability and appearance, when looking back on the old photos of her soon after arrival, is amazing. Although there are only a handful of volunteers working on her on a regular basis, she is taking shape rather like a phoenix rising from the ashes.

The naval contingent, from HMS Collingswood, has only been able to put in a few appearances, but the new term starts in September and we hope to see more of them once again.

There are now six deck beams fitted forward and the main bulkhead is now in place.

Peter Marsh and Alan Bailly have been busy on the starboard and port sides, removing and replacing the planking and it is now more or less complete.

Under Derek Abra's eagle eye, Derek Gange & John Pondsford have now completed the rear deck frames and John Delahay has started working on the transom.

Sally Marsh has taken on the laborious task of slowly but surely stripping the old paint from all the inner surfaces, whilst Len Lochrie is having fun scarfing in all the variously shaped and sized pieces of wood into the hull, replacing the damaged sections.

Steady progress continues to be made; now we'd like to find a nice Gardner diesel - any offers?



Marine Insurance Specialists

in the provision of classic yacht, pleasure craft and marine trade insurance services since 1964

- Classic yachts and traditional boats
- Marine trade and professional services
- Marinas and boatyards

Hayes Parsons Marine

A trading division of Hayes Parsons Ltd | Commercial Insurance Broker

St. Lawrence House, Broad Street, Bristol BS1 2HF

Tel 0117 929 9381 Fax 0117 925 4179

Email marine@hayesparsons.co.uk Website www.hayesparsons.co.uk

Authorised and Regulated by the Financial Services Authority



B I B A
Member of the British Insurance Brokers' Association



Other News

Annual General Meeting.

The AGM took place on 7th October on board *SS Shieldhall*. Trustee Jerry Lewis took the chair. After the reports of the Trustees and the Treasurer were approved nem. con., Clive Purser, who has been 'living with' **Challenge** for the last two or more years was deservedly elected as an additional Trustee.

Veteran's Day on the River Thames 16 September

We have received thanks from the Welfare Officer of the Bournemouth branch of Dunkirk Veterans.

Thank you to ALL the Association of Dunkirk Little Ships and their Owners for all the hard work that is involved in preparing this Special Day for the Veterans their wives and carers.



Shoreham Artist

While she was in the Shoreham Dry Dock **Challenge** attracted a great deal of attention, including local dinghy sailor and artist Alan Warren, whose "day job" is Chairman of a Funeral Directors.

Alan was a Silver medallist in the Munich Olympics 1972 held at Kiel and competed at Montreal 1976



All work and no play....

J Class outing

In mid-July a group of members and volunteers enjoyed a wonderful day out on *Shieldhall*. This was to watch four of the incredible J Class yachts racing. The yachts taking part were *Velsheda*, *Lionheart*, *Rainbow* & *Ranger*. The weather, although overcast and grey, gave rise to some exciting sailing with stiff gusts of up to 35knots. We were able to follow the race as *SS Shieldhall* steamed up and down the course. It was wonderful to witness these incredible old yachts doing what they do best - sailing hard.

(*Shieldhall* was built on the Clyde to carry sludge for Glasgow Corporation. She is 268ft long x 44ft 6in beam and has a draught of 13ft 3in aft. Her propulsion machinery has similarities to that on board 'Titanic'. - Ed.)



BBC Documentary

As part of a new series of the BBC Documentary "Britain & the Sea" which is due to be broadcast on BBC One in November, David Dumbleby (who enjoys sailing a Cornish Crabber in his spare time) and a film crew spent a few hours on board **Challenge** interviewing Mick Wenban who is understood to be her last commercial skipper. Mick's father (also Mick) was crew on **Challenge** at Dunkirk.

