
FALMOUTH HARBOUR COMMISSIONERS NEWSLETTER

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JANUARY 2004

PORT WEBSITE TAKES OFF

After its recent re-vamp the number of hits on the Port website www.falmouthport.co.uk has gone through the roof. From its modest beginnings where 100 hits a month were considered good going the site is now counting more than 4000 hits a month. A key factor in the increased popularity of the site has been the publication of a regularly updated shipping movements list. The Site has been recently modified again to include an automated quotation system for pilotage charges applicable to bunker ships. The Site was developed and improved by a local company, Slightly Different of Penryn.

MOORING CAPACITY INCREASED

A development of the trot moorings near Prince of Wales Pier has allowed 21 new mooring facilities to be created. The re-development was designed by Moorings Officer Lloyd Pond and was the final stage of the mooring re-organisation programme commenced in 1994. Lloyd commented "this is about as far as we can go with developing the space available for moorings. The new facilities will certainly come in handy as the demand for moorings is very high."

QUEEN MARY CALLS

A trial visit by the Queen Mary 2 was a very pleasant New Year surprise for the Port on the 3rd January. Arranged at short notice the Trial involved anchoring in Falmouth Bay and launch trips in to Falmouth Docks to facilitate crew training prior to embarking passengers for real. Falmouth Pilot Captain Gordon Kent had the honour of being the first local pilot to have the con of the mighty vessel. Captain Bush undertook the outbound voyage and was able to present the Captain with a plaque to commemorate his visit.



Pilot Philip Bush Presenting a Commissioners Plaque to Captain Paul Wright Master of Queen Mary 2

Photo David Barnicoat

NEW BUNKERING BUSINESS STARTS

The pre-Christmas gloom brought about by the departure of Chevron Texaco and their bunker supply vessel BRABOURNE was dispelled by the news of a new bunkering operation starting up. Hull based bunker specialists Tramp Oil have reached agreement with Falmouth Oil Services for an initial six month trial use of their fuel oil tanks. They have chartered the Whitakers tanker WHITSTAR to deliver the oil to customer vessels. "We are very pleased to welcome Tramp Oil to Falmouth" commented Chief Executive Mark Sansom "although this is only a trial period, there has been strong demand for the service and we are optimistic about the future of the Operation".

HARBOUR REVISION ORDER ADVERTISED

The Falmouth Harbour Revision Order 2004 has been advertised which is a significant step towards it finally coming into force. The period for objections to be lodged runs until the 19th of February after which if there are no objections to the Order it will be passed on for signing by the Secretary of State. If objections are received then a public inquiry into the order will be set up.

MAJOR NAVAL EXERCISE HELD

A major naval exercise including elements of the Standing Naval Force Atlantic was held in the Bay and Estuary during January. As part of the exercise, dummy mines were laid by the Torpedo Recovery Vessel TORMENTOR and were recovered by the mine hunters HMS SANDOWN and HMS SHOREHAM. Deputy Harbour Master Mark Killingback acted as Liaison Officer for the Exercise and spent a day aboard HMS SHOREHAM engaged in minehunting activities.

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HMS SHOREHAM

DATE FOR PUBLIC MEETING SET

Falmouth Harbour Commissioners have set a date for their public meeting. It will be held on Wednesday 31st March 2004 in the Learning Centre at the Maritime Museum at 7.30pm. There will be a review of the past year and plans for next year will be outlined. This will be followed by an open question and answer session.

MARINE SAFETY COMMITTEE MEETING A SUCCESS

The Marine Safety Committee which includes representatives from a wide range of harbour users groups and harbour authorities involved in regulating activities in the Fal and Falmouth Bay had its first full meeting on 17th December. All attendees were asked to give a short description of their activities and invited to highlight areas of concern. The meeting was judged a success by those who attended and a number of useful suggestions were made which will form the basis of the Committee's Agenda for the coming year.

CRUISE SHIP PROGRAMME 2004

A & P have revealed that the port can expect another bumper year of cruise visits. Including turnaround calls for the Van Gogh, there will be over 40 cruise calls and expected visitors include the Royal Princess, the Grand Princess and the World.

More news? for an extended version of this newsletter see www.falmouthport.co.uk.

PHOTO NEWS BY DAVID BARNICOAT

FALMOUTH REPRESENTED AT CONFERENCE

The Port of Falmouth has received a warm welcome from the international tall ships community after Falmouth Tall Ships Association (FTSA) committee member Anne Oliver attended the Sail Training International (STI) three day annual conference in Barcelona.

Anne went to Barcelona to promote Falmouth as a port of call for the world's tall ships and to meet with the various sail training organisations and captains of the ships.

But the STI top brass have warned that Falmouth needs to upgrade port facilities before it would consider using the port to host a major tall ships event again.

STI Race Director Peter Newall said "Falmouth is a beautiful port. However, it desperately needs improvements. Until this is completed the STI will not consider Falmouth as a host port."

FTSA chairman Mike Rangecroft, one of the team that organised the highly successful 1998 Tall Ships Race, echoed his words. Mike said: "Until such times as the docks are re-built and more wharf space is made available we will not see another spectacular Tall ships race from Falmouth, although it does not stop us from welcoming individual ships on a regular basis. Anne has done a wonderful job promoting our port."

The STI conference is the most important event in the tall ships calendar when future tall ships races and STI strategy is discussed. Anne's attendance at the Barcelona conference has been judged an outstanding success by the FTSA.

Anne met up again with Russian captains Sergey Timoshkov of the Russian tall ship Mir and Gennady Kolomenski master of the Russian barque Kruzenshtern that visited Falmouth in the summer. Both masters confirmed that their ships will visit Falmouth in 2004. The Mir, which is scheduled to visit Falmouth next June has all the correct passenger certificates necessary for the FTSA to market Day Sails for up to 200 passengers.

"Without question Falmouth is well known to everyone but if the port is to host another Tall ships Race the town and docks will have to improve its facilities and transport infrastructure if it is to succeed in future bids to hold this prestigious event. The FTSA recognise this.

In the meantime, it is vitally important that we maintain our connections with the tall ships and to this end I extended formal invitations to many ship masters to visit Falmouth in the future." said Anne.

Behind the scenes she is working closely with internationally acclaimed tall ships photographer Max Mudie on presenting a package to the Sail Training Association (STA) to bring Match Brig Racing to Falmouth. The brigs Stavros Niarchos and Prince William raced in the Solent in October.

2005 could see more tall ships visiting Falmouth and Anne has talked with several delegates in Barcelona about establishing a small feeder race from Falmouth to Waterford.

Captain Eric Shaw, master of the American barque Eagle has expressed an interest in coming to Falmouth in 2005 on his way to Portsmouth for the bi-centenary events to mark the Battle of Trafalgar, after he heard of the port's historic link with Admiral Nelson.

QUEEN MARY 2 VISITS PORT



The £550 million Cunard super-liner Queen Mary 2, the world's largest liner, anchored in Falmouth bay over the

weekend to carry out lifeboat drills on the second of her three two day shake-down cruises before she is officially named today by the Queen at Southampton. Shrouded by mist the 1,132 feet long mighty Cunarder looked impressive from the shore. And Captain Paul Wright, the man who will take over command from Commodore Ronald Warwick after the ship's maiden voyage lives at Malpas, near Truro.

Falmouth pilot Captain Gordon Kent had the unique honour of piloting Cunard's 150,000 tonne flagship into her anchorage south west of Pendennis Point. He told Commodore Ronald Warwick, QM 2's master, that it was an immense honour for the Port of Falmouth to welcome the liner just before she embarks on her maiden voyage from Southampton.

Gordon and Commodore Warwick first met in 1998 when the liner Queen Elizabeth 2 anchored off the port on Tall ships Race day.

Gordon said: "I came on duty at 0800 hours on Saturday and an hour later I was on the bridge of the worlds most talked about ship."

Peter Fox, managing director of GC Fox (SW) Ltd, the liner's agents, boarded the ship with agency manager Geoff Hoyle to conduct any business.

Captain Paul Wright, the alternate master of the liner, who lives at Malpas, near Truro, gave the Packet an exclusive interview when I boarded the ship later in the day with pilot Phil Bush. On behalf of the Falmouth Harbour Commissioners we presented Captain Wright with a commemorative plaque to mark the ship's historic visit.

Captain Wright said: "Our thanks to the Falmouth port authority for this plaque which we will hang with pride on the bulkhead to remind us of Falmouth. And a big thank you to everyone concerned who accommodated us at short notice. The lifeboat and safety drills went according to plan."

He managed to go ashore in one of the liner's high-tech tenders. "I did some shopping and had a pasty." Tenders from the liner tested out the passenger landing pontoon at County wharf in case of future visits.

54 year old Paul who spent 10 years living in Cornwall in his 20's, has lived at Malpas for four years where he has a waterside apartment on the banks of the river. He has spent the past four years in command of the Cunard liner Queen Elizabeth 2 before joining the QM 2 in the builder's yard in France in November 2003.

"This is a superb ship and we are all immensely proud to sail on this futuristic liner." he said.

Commodore Warwick was below decks signing copies of his new book about the QE 2 when we joined Paul Wright on the bridge for the liner's departure. Surrounded by banks of computerised displays the navigating bridge is space age in concept.

I jokingly rebuked him for not flying the St Piran courtesy ensign from the ship's yardarm. "Next time we anchor off it will be flying" he said.

Commodore Warwick whose father Commodore William Warwick took the liner QE 2 on her maiden voyage will hand over command of the leviathan to Paul Wright after the QM 2's maiden voyage.

QM 2 will take 2,620 passengers from Southampton to, Funchal, Canaries, Barbados and Fort Lauderdale.

When the order came from the forecandle that the anchor was aweigh Captain Wright blew farewell to Falmouth on the ship's mega whistle which is an exact replica of the whistle on the former Queen Mary. A compressed air system creates the two octaves below middle C note that is audible for a distance of ten miles.

On Pendennis Point and along the seafront hundreds of people watched as the pride of Britain's Merchant Navy steamed away to the south. *At the pilot station Phil Bush and I shook hands with Captain Wright and made our way to the pilot ladder. This alone took several minutes as we walked along a never ending alleyway, down 15 decks in the lift, a then a brief walk to the pilot door. To end a memorable day QM 2's whistle blew farewell to the pilot boat as the ship headed off up Channel.* Without sounding Gallophobic it is a shame that this liner of superlatives could not have been built in Britain instead of France.



■ The Queen Mary 2 can carry 2,620 passengers in 1,310 staterooms including four royal suites and six penthouses. She has a multi-national crew of 1,253 . The Canyon Ranch health Spa is manned by 51 health experts who work in a 20,000 sq ft facility comprising of a mud therapy pool, 24 treatment rooms, a waterfall, saunas, and reflexology basins.

The ship boasts 8 galleys, 14 buffet outlets, 43 walk-in style pantries and 14 bars. The three deck high main dining room holds 1,300 spanning the width of the ship with a central staircase. A library holding 10,000 books with a bookshop adjacent. Other attractions for passengers are the five swimming pools, a disco, a 500 seater theatre, art gallery, maritime museum, a casino, and a planetarium the first on any liner.

A partnership between the Oxford University and Cunard will see many eminent historians, authors, artists, scientists and celebrities giving on-board lectures.

Four Wartsila diesel engines and two gas turbines, known as a CODAG (Combined Diesel and Gas) give the leviathan a top speed of 30.25 knots. The CODAG system generates enough power for propulsion and the ship's services, generating a staggering 118MW, enough power to supply a city the size of Southampton.

QM 2 has four podded propulsion units mounted on the hull each weighing 350 tonnes. Two of the units are fixed and the other two are azimuth types that can be used in conjunction with three powerful bow thrusters to turn the ship in its own length. The propellers are made of stainless steel not bronze.

The liner has its own Internet Cafés and state of the art computer centre. Via the Thuraya satellite system all the liner's staterooms are connected to the Internet. Passengers have a temporary onboard e-mail address allowing them access to the Net 24 hours a day, seven days a week via a high speed Internet satellite link.

Statistics:

- There are 2,000 bathrooms, 2,500 kilometres of electrical wiring, 3,000 telephones, 25,000 sq metres of carpet and 4,339 steps.
- It takes 250 tonnes of paint cover the ship's 550,000 sq metres.
- From the keel to the top of the funnel is 236 feet.
- QM 2 is 147ft longer than the Eiffel Tower is tall and

MAJOR NAVAL EXERCISE HELD

HMS Sandown and HMS Shoreham two Royal Navy mine countermeasures vessels have been operating in Falmouth bay and the Carrick Roads for the past week hunting for dummy mines laid by the Torpedo Recovery Vessel (TRV) Tormentor.

The Sandown Class Single Role Minehunters of which there are 12 ships were designed for hunting and destroying mines and for operating in deep and exposed waters. Mine countermeasures ships have the task of keeping ports and coastal shipping lanes free from the threat of mining. Technological development in mine warfare has meant that mines are now capable of being highly selective as they are capable of targeting a specific ship signature.

Modern mines can be triggered not only by collision but also by the sound of a ship passing through water or by magnetic signature of the ship's hull. The minehunters have to be state of the art vessels built of non-magnetic materials. The mines are detected sonar by bouncing high frequency sound waves off them.

The ships carry remotely operated unmanned submersibles which can identify mines and destroyed by a high explosive charge. In the past decade the Royal

navy has been involved in mine clearance operations in the Falkland Islands, Red Sea and the Gulf

HMS Shoreham built in 2001 is the last of the class. Another of the class is HMS Penzance. All the ships are constructed of glass reinforced plastic. The MOD decided in 1991 that the TRV's would be converted into practice minelayers when appropriate. Tormentor and her sister ships can carry up to 20 mines. The Royal navy has three minecountermeasures squadrons, two based in Portsmouth and one in Faslane.

HM ships Truro, Newlyn, Fowey, Mullion, Newquay, Padstow, Polperro, Portreath, and Saltash were all Aberdare class mine sweepers that saw service after the first World War when a large number of these steam powered ships were commissioned into the Royal Navy.

ENDEAVOUR VISIT PLANNED

Captain Chris Blake, OBE, master of replica sailing ship HM bark Endeavour is visiting the port this morning to meet with harbour master Captain Mark Sansom and Mike Rangecroft, one of the main organisers of Falmouth Week, to discuss the arrangements for Endeavour's high profile visit to the port later this summer.

Endeavour is coming to the port in August for a 12 day visit. Part of the time she will be an exhibition ship open to the public. A series of day sails are being planned including a trip during the Falmouth Classics event.

The beautiful sailing ship is currently cruising in the Canary Islands where she met up with the luxury liner Queen Mary 2 recently and fired one of her famous broadsides.

Endeavour is an exact replica of Cook's original Endeavour, a former three-masted Whitby collier named the Earl of Pembroke that sailed into Botany Bay, Australia, in 1770 under the command of Captain James Cook. Built at a cost of 08 million she is just a little more expensive than the 02, 500 the Royal Navy paid for the Earl of Pembroke in 1768.

Lt James Cook set sail from Plymouth on Friday August 26 1768 on a unique voyage of scientific investigation and exploration. After observing the Transit of Venus across the sun at Otaheite, in the Pacific, Cook sailed south west to disprove or otherwise the existence of the "Great White land."

By 1770 Cook had reached New Zealand. he circumnavigated the North and South islands before continuing westwards. Cook's three year voyage ranks as one of the greatest of all time in terms of seamanship, navigation and geography. On this voyage he was the first captain to calculate his longitudinal position with accuracy using a complex mathematical formula developed in the 1760's.

MIR TO VISIT



The Russian barque Mir under the command of Captain Sergey Timoshov is one of four well-known sailing ships expected to visit the port during the summer months. Falmouth Tall Ships Association (FTSA) is hosting the ship during her three day visit in June.

The FTSA is still waiting to hear if the Russian four-masted barque Kruzenshtern will be calling again this year.

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Anne promoted Falmouth as a port of call for the world's tall ships with the various sail training organisations and captains of the ships.

The Sail Training Association brig Prince William is scheduled to berth at the docks for three days in May and the Stavros S. Niarchos arrives in the autumn for a similar period.