

World Ship Society – Torbay & East Devon Branch

Contact: mail@david-walker.org, 07765 203263

Meetings held the second Tuesday of each month at the Alice Cross Centre, Teignmouth



Branch Newsletter: August 2014

Editorial

As usual, this month has seen the start of the decline in shipping over the summer months. Hopefully though the quality of ships we have had has made up for it – Virage was a particular highlight of July at Teignmouth. Thanks, as usual, to our contributors. I would particularly like to thank Roger for supplying me with his Baywatch column for the past few months, and I am pleased to say that despite finishing supplying the Herald Express with information he is continuing to do so for the newsletter.

Branch Calendar

09/09/2014 Members evening
14/10/2014 Ken Cload
11/11/2014 Update 2014 (*Roger Musselwhite*)

Branch Notes: July 2014

July saw our regular “Baywatch” evening, presented as usual by John Eaton. We saw a selection of the ships that have called in Tor Bay to land deep sea pilots over the last 12 months. John followed this with a series of photographs of inland waterways barges; John’s knowledge on this subject is encyclopedic, and he provided an extremely informative and detailed commentary to the photographs. We finished with some videos of ships on the continent, which ended the evening on a high. As always, John provided an excellent evening’s entertainment, and we hope he will do the same next year.

Shipping Movements: July 2014

Teignmouth

Virage (12/3200dwt, NLD) arrived 01/07/2014 from Ghent and sailed 03/07/2014 for Portland.

Verona (88/3304dwt, ATG) arrived 01/07/2014 from Le Legue and sailed 02/07/2014 for Vyborg via Le Treport and Moerdijk.

Aller (05/2910dwt, ATG) arrived 09/07/2014 from Lillebonne and sailed 10/07/2014 for Gijon.

Paper Moon (90/2717dwt, ATG) arrived 09/07/2014 from Rotterdam and sailed 12/07/2014 for Rotterdam.

Sea Kestrel (93/2225dwt, CYM) arrived 12/07/2014 from Port Talbot and sailed 15/07/2014 for Porthoustock.

Celtic Forester (85/3048dwt, GBR) arrived 12/07/2014 from Aveiro and sailed 13/07/2014 for Dordrecht.

Casablanca (94/3002dwt, ATG) arrived 16/07/2014 from Lorient and sailed 17/07/2014 for Fecamp.

Ajos G (95/3006dwt, ATG) arrived 19/07/2014 from St. Malo and sailed 21/07/2014 for Rotterdam.

Nortramp (12/2600dwt, ATG) arrived 23/07/2014 from Rouen and sailed 26/07/2014 for Casablanca.

Eems Sprinter (07/2620dwt, NLD) arrived 26/07/2014 from Wismar and sailed 28/07/2014 for Erith.

Sea Charente (96/2100dwt, NLD) arrived 26/07/2014 from Erith and sailed 28/07/2014 for Erith.

Anita (13/2625dwt, NLD) arrived 26/07/2014 from Humber and sailed 28/07/2014 for Casablanca.

Pommern (94/3050dwt, ATG) arrived 27/07/2014 from Methil and sailed 28/07/2014 for Alexandria via Fowey.

Sea Ruby (92/2225dwt, CYM) arrived 28/07/2014 from Port Talbot and sailed 30/07/2014 for Vlissingen.

Figaro (03/1850dwt, VCT) arrived 29/07/2014 from Radicatel and sailed 29/07/2014 for Landskrona.

Lyme Bay

Gas Arctic (92/3590dwt, MLT) arrived 11/07/2014 from Aveiro and sailed 23/07/2014 for Fowey, awaiting orders.

Tor Bay

Shagangfirst Power (11/179527dwt, PAN) arrived 11/07/2014 from Ijmuiden and sailed 16/07/2014 for Ponta da Madeira, underwater inspection.



A recent visitor to Teignmouth was Virage. She is seen here arriving at Ghent to load for Teignmouth on 27/06/2014 (left, Tom Walker) and departing Teignmouth for Portland on 03/07/2014 (right, David Walker).



Two July visitors: Eems Sprinter (left) arriving 27/07/2014 and Figaro (right) alongside on 29/07/2014. (David Walker).

50 Years Ago – August 1964

Tom Walker

The number of ships arriving at Teignmouth in August 1964 was about 40, similar to the previous month. Where vessels loaded outwards, the cargoes were all clay, with the exception of the Dutch vessel RAMONA (333/49) which had arrived from 'Paris' (in July) and sailed for Ardrossan with scrap. Inward cargoes were mainly coal, Newton Abbot power station supplies arriving on Metcalf's MOIRA M (678/37), MONICA M. (534/36), and THOMAS M. (592/36), and household coal on the ANJA (262/40/NLD), QUEENSGATE (200/59) and VECTIS ISLE (213/39). I believe the VECTIS ISLE was the first coaster owned by Vectis Shipping of Cowes, a company that grew into the Carisbrooke Shipping organisation. Other inward cargoes included salt from Stettin on the Dutch HENRICA THEKLA (500/58) and fertilizers on the small Dutch coaster DEMOCRAAT (198/30) which had been a regular caller at Teignmouth since before the last War. The DEMOCRAAT had several names in her life and was seized by Germany during the War in 1941. She was eventually broken up in 1971-2. The oldest caller was a converted sailing ship, the MARION, built in Hoogezand in 1918, and trading under the Danish flag. Everard's APRICITY (394/33) was the only other British visitor of note, for clay. Arrivals were mainly from the UK, France, and Eire and local arrivals included ships from Exeter and Topsham. Clay cargoes were mainly for NW Europe, Scandinavia, and the Mediterranean, with the farthest recorded being for Beirut.

A number of coasters were noted as calling at Tor Bay and included the West German WARFLETHERSAND (960/62), Comben Longstaff's WINCHESTERBROOK (1,040/60) and Everard's ATOMICITY (592/47), FRED EVERARD (1,542/58), and SAGACITY (943/46). These would have probably bunkered at Brixham Breakwater, but the larger ones, especially the Comben Logstaff ship would have been likely callers at Berry Head Quarry. A larger caller at Brixham Breakwater was Cory's MONKSGARTH (10,760/60) an ore carrier, which stayed overnight on 10 August 1964.

Vessels for the Channel Pilots from Brixham included Glen Line's GLENGYLE (8,957/40), and British India's

KENYA (14,464/51), whilst on a show the flag 'sail by' the P&O's CHUSAN (24,261/50) coasted passed both Lyme Bay and Tor Bay on the 10th.

The submarine HMS TRUNCHEON paid a courtesy call for three days to the area.

During first weekend in August, Devonport hosted the annual Navy Days. During my visit the RFA tanker BLUE RANGER (3,475/41) was at anchor in Plymouth Sound along with Christian Salvesen's freighter SALVINA (8,956/63), which I believe was awaiting a berth at Spiller's in Millbay Docks.

Coastal traffic included P.A. van ES's BREEZAND (499/62), Coast Line's CALEDONIAN COAST (1,265/48) - on her scheduled call at Victoria Wharves, Everard's GRIT (2,739/58) - alongside Cattedown Wharf, and Queenship's OSBORNE QUEEN (1,424/57). In Millbay Docks the Oil Sludge ship TULIPFIELD (390/22) was moored, a steamship owned by British Wheeler Process Ltd., of Liverpool she had been built in Hamburg and her previous roles included a salvage ship and a trawler. She had been named Nordland until 1948.

As far as the Navy Days is concerned, I cannot trace my program so I can only list the RFAs present. Tugs included the paddle tug FAITHFUL (473/57) - from the Director class of diesel-electric tugs specifically built to handle the larger aircraft carriers ARK ROYAL and EAGLE, but with salvage capability (although no towing winch). The stores carrier ROBERT MIDDLETON (1,126/38) was also present. In the Tamar a large number of RFAs were still laid up, but these were covered in previous notes. The WAVE CHIEF (8,297/46) was alongside the Torpoint Fuel Jetty, and the other tanker of note was the OLN A (12,713/45) which was open to the public. We (misguidedly) toured the OLN A to watch the anti-submarine display, and was lucky enough to find a deck completely clear of the crowds to view it. When the display started the frigate EASTBOURNE fired her anti-submarine depth charges as part of the show. EASTBOURNE was moored alongside the OLN A and we were right above the frigate. By the time we got back to Teignmouth on the train, my ears had returned to normal, and the headache only lasted until the next morning! The OLN A had been laid down for Shell as the Hyalina, but completed and commissioned into the Royal Navy as H.M.S. OLN A, a fleet oiler (Pennant Nos.X116 and B216) with an armoured hull and saw service in the Pacific. She had turbo-electric propulsion, based on the American T2 tankers and was later used for re-fuelling experiments to help in the design of future RFA tankers. Transferred to the RFA, post war her pennant no. became A216. She took the part of the German auxiliary ALTMARK in the 1956 film "Battle of the River Plate". She also took part in the Christmas Island 'H' Bomb Tests and provided support to the aircraft carriers in the Suez campaign. She was broken up at Castellon in 1967 - sold for £125,000.

The only major casualty that I have this month was that of the British coaster GUERNSEY COAST (636/38). She was owned by a member of the Coast Lines group and was on a voyage from Guernsey to Shoreham with tomatoes when she was in collision with the Liberian flagged liberty ship CATCHER (7238/43). The GUERNSEY COAST, which had been built by the Ardrossan Dockyard Co. as the WELSH COAST (a name she retained until 1955) sank about 40 miles north of Cherbourg with the loss of one crew member. The CATCHER, which had been built by Bethlehem Fairfield at Baltimore as the LEWIS EMERY JR, traded until August 1968 when she was broken up at Bilbao.

A Smuggling Tale

This month also marks the 50th anniversary of a notable incident in Teignmouth's history. Unlike traditional stories of West Country smuggling, this was not a dark moonless night with a howling wind and lamps shaded on cliff tops.

We were watching some sporting occasion on the Den at Teignmouth (probably a push ball tournament) on a fine August evening when we noticed a fast patrol vessel heading for the harbour. Unfortunately none of our group had a camera on us (a luxury in those days), but we went to the Eastern Quay where this vessel (the VALIANT) was mooring up. I asked one of the crew members who had come ashore to manage the lines how long they were staying and was abruptly told to mind my own business and 'go away'.

The next day the story unfolded on the radio, television, and in the press. Two local fishermen had been arrested for being 'in possession of uncustomed goods' (smuggling to us), namely 74,000 cigarettes and 268 bottles of whisky. Their fishing boat, the ANN-LYN had been impounded. There were rumours abounding in the town, and the story has it that one dock worker did not speak to his wife for weeks when he went home and found her pouring his bottle of whisky down the toilet in a panic - especially as he claimed he had bought the bottle at an off-licence up town...

Pubs and houses were searched by the police and revenue men but no one else was charged in relation to this incident. Later in the year the two accused were each sentenced to six months in prison, with each facing a fine of £1,392 or a further six months (to put this in context - I started work the following year for £5.10s per week). An appeal by an ex Council Chairman for a fund to support the families did not meet with much success.

Arising from this incident HM Customs put out a general alert for any ship en-route to Teignmouth to be stopped and searched. Unloading at Topsham, with Teignmouth as her next port of call was the West German SEEFALKE (416/39). Twenty-four bottles of brandy was found on board and the skipper subsequently fined £75 at Wonford Magistrates Court, Exeter. The skipper claimed on Court that his monthly pay was £100 and that the bottles were destined for Teignmouth.

Sea Wall Update



Willpower arriving with Haven Seariser 4 16/07/2014 (Tom Walker).

Work is beginning to get underway on the long-term repairs to the sea wall following the damage inflicted by the winter storms in February. Williams Shipping's **Willpower** arrived with the jack-up barge **Haven Seariser 4** in tow on 16/07/2014. She deposited the barge on the Western Quay before departing shortly after. The barge has remained there ever since; a second barge is expected, and will be moved to the section of the sea wall in order for it to be reinforced to prevent such damage from occurring in the future. The work is due to be completed by the end of February 2015, subject to weather conditions.

Many thanks to this month's contributors: Roger Musselwhite, Hugh Rodway and Tom Walker. Contributions for future issues, either short articles or news with a local maritime theme, are welcome. Please email them to David Walker.