

Black Jack

QUARTERLY MAGAZINE
SOUTHAMPTON BRANCH
WORLD SHIP SOCIETY
www.sotonwss.org.uk



Issue No: 205

Winter 2022-23

A Happy Christmas and a peaceful New Year to all our Readers



A seasonal photo of **Aurelia** in the snow at 38-9 berth preparing to sail on a cruise to the Canary Islands on 10th December 1967. She had been built in 1938 as the **Huascaran** for the Hamburg America Line and after the war became Canadian Pacific's emigrant ship **Beaverbrae**, being sold in 1954 and rebuilt as the **Aurelia** for the Italian Cogedar Line. In 1970 she went to Chandris Lines as **Romanza** and in 1997 she was lost by fire as **Romantica**.

photo: Nigel Robinson

Black Jack – Winter 2022 No.204

Editorial team

Nigel Robinson, Michael Page & Andrew McAlpine.
Website – Neil Richardson

**Black Jack is the quarterly magazine of the
Southampton Branch of the World Ship Society.**

Branch Meetings

Venue:

St James Road Methodist Church

St James Road

Shirley

Southampton, SO15 5HE

All meetings commence at 19.30 and the meeting room is to be vacated by 21.30. Meetings are on the second Tuesday of each month.

Honorary Branch Secretary

David Oldham

2 Ferndale Road, Marchwood

Southampton, SO40 4XY

email: d.oldham@hotmail.co.uk

Chairman

Neil Richardson

109 Stubbington Lane

Stubbington

Fareham, Hants

PO14 2PB

01329 663450

Treasurer

Andrew Hogg

"Debanker"

Lyburn Road

Hamptworth

Salisbury

SP5 2DP

01794 390502

Visits Organiser

Adrian Tennet

34 New Road

Fair Oak

SO50 8EN

023 8060 0197

Full details of all committee members can be found on the Southampton WSS website at

www.sotonwss.org.uk

Editorial contact:

Nigel Robinson

2 Glencarron Way

Bassett

Southampton

SO16 7EF

023 8079 0876

email: nigelvrobinson@gmail.com

Next meeting:

December 13th John Havers Tribute Neil Richardson

2023 Branch Meeting Programme

January 10th	My voyage – Suez, East & South Africa	David Hawand
February 14th	154 days at sea - sailing on Nevasa, Reina del Mar, Edinburgh and Pendennis Castles	Steve Pink
March 14th	A time at sea with the British Antarctic Survey	Capt Robin Plumley MBE
April 11 th	Cornish Ports No 6	Krispen Atkinson
May 9th	Meanderings on the Water	Paul Gosling
June 13th	Malta based vessels	Phil Simons
July 11th	Mini-talks - Geest Bananas other mini talksTBA	Adrian Tennet
August 8th	London Docks	Ian Wells
September 12th	TBC	
October 10th	Italy part two	David Oldham
November 14th	AGM and Photo Competition	
December 12 th	Cruising Again	Bill Mayes

All contributions to *BJ*, by post, email, memory stick or CD are most welcome. Any article with a connection to The Solent area would be much appreciated. The Editor could reproduce magazine or newspaper articles but preference is given to articles 'by the branch – for the branch'.

Would members please ensure that any changes to their postal and/or email addresses are notified to the Branch as soon as possible.

Andrew's Note Book

Some new or infrequent callers to Southampton Docks by Andrew McAlpine

Welcome to the latest notebook from the port of Southampton; here are some updates on the comings and goings and other news from around the port.

Summer has gone and the cruise season is over so many of the ships have headed for warmer climes, one notable ship that will remain all year is *MSC Virtuosa* after MSC announced that she would remain homeported in Southampton for the winter season.

Left: **MSC Virtuosa** seen here with **MSC Magnifica** on 3rd September.



On 6th November, Southampton had a one-off visit from the Carnival Cruise's newest ship **Carnival Celebration**. She had arrived direct from the Meyer Werft shipyard in Turku, Finland and the first passengers were boarding in Southampton for her inaugural trans-Atlantic crossing.

Right: **Carnival Celebration** seen during her maiden call on 6th November.



On the container side, the first ultra large MOL ships have received their new ONE name and magenta livery. We saw visits from **ONE Triumph** and **ONE Tribute**, but most interestingly **ONE Trust** arrived at the end of November sporting a newly installed "wind break" on the forecastle. The work was carried out at the Qingdao Beihai Shipyard in China.

Left: **One Trust** (built 2017) arriving 19th November

The **BBC Russia** has made a couple of visits during the second half of the year, she had been chartered to bring around 200 containers per voyage of Whiskey loaded in the USA to Northern Europe.

Right: **BBC Russia** (built 2018) seen discharging containers 26th October 2022.

Below: The interesting looking **Symphony Sun** (built 2016) loading yachts on 6th September.



until next time stay safe and
happy ship spotting
Andrew

all photos by Andrew McAlpine

WHITE BROTHERS, later WHITES SHIPYARD (SOUTHAMPTON) LTD – a lesser known local shipyard, located on the eastern bank of the River Itchen

About 1892, Arthur White and his family (including sons Arthur, Harold and Herbert) moved to Southampton from the Isle of Wight. By 1894, at “Itchen Ferry” they had established the new 20 acre White Brothers waterfront shipyard on a long, narrow strip of land sandwiched between the tidal river and Portsmouth railway line. The following year, 1895, Arthur died at Cosham and is buried in Northwood cemetery on the Island. In the following 1901 census, Arthur's widow (Mary Alice) is shown living ‘on own means’ and her three sons, described as ‘Yacht Builder – employer’, were living just a short distance away from the works in Pear Tree Avenue.

Although White Brothers and W. White & Sons of Vectis Works at Cowes are family related, there appears to be no connection at all with the larger shipbuilding firm of J. Samuel White of Cowes, although the similarity of names has caused much confusion, even amongst some well-known maritime writers.

The full title of the original company was White Brothers, Yacht Builders, Engineers and Shiprepairers Ltd of Itchen Ferry. This firm went into liquidation in 1923 and the yard appears to have been bought by James Cory & Sons and renamed Whites Southampton Yachtbuilding & Engineering Co. Ltd., at some point being part of Lord Runcimans' group of companies. Whites Shipyard (Southampton) Ltd was incorporated on 1st July 1924 and this remained the main trading name, the final owners acquiring the business in 1944. In November 1962, the recession and shortage of work resulted in an announcement that the shipyard would close about the end of January 1963 to enable the firm to “concentrate on the storage and maintenance of laid-up yachts and minesweepers at Hythe”. The name finally disappeared only when the Company was dissolved in 2009.



In the early years, the company mainly built large numbers of small yachts, launches, non-propelled barges and similar craft, although there were some exceptions. Herbert William White seems to have been the main yacht designer for the company. One of his most famous designs was the 1920-built composite 119½ft gaff-rigged ‘Big Class’ racing yacht **Terpsichore**. Unfortunately, her steel mast and gaff-rig could not compete with the likes of **Britannia I** and **Shamrock**, so in 1924 she was rebuilt and renamed **Lulworth**. In 1947 she was saved from a scrapyard and converted by her original builders into a Hamble houseboat. In 1990, the hull was shipped to Italy, where 70-80% of the hull and furnishings were restored and the 1926 rig was replicated, including the world's tallest wooden mast (above). At 186 tons and 46.3m, **Lulworth** is currently the world's largest gaff-rigged cutter still afloat.

Other large yachts built in this period included wooden-hulled 1903-built auxiliary Bermudian schooner **Valrosa** (98ft/109 tons), 1906-built aux schooner **White Shadow** (121ft/250 tons), 1911-built aux schooner **Esperos** (213ft/258 tons), 1913-built aux ketch **Hidalga** (92ft/114 tons) and steel-hulled 1927-built twin screw schooner **Curlew** (117ft/183 tons), later renamed **Grace**.

STEAM HOPPER BARGE VESSELS

During the early 1920's, the yard built four hopper barge vessels, all apparently to the same design, two each for James Dredging, Towage & Transport Co Ltd., London and for Spanish Gov't.

- | | |
|---------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Foremost VI | completed 6/11/1922 (y/n 219) for James Dredging; 1923 sold to Great Western Railway, 1948 to British Transport Commission, 1963 to British Transport Docks Board; 1964 broken up at Passage West. |
| Ganguil no.1 | completed October 1922 (y/n 220); launched as Foremost VII for James Dredging, but delivered January 1923 to Spanish Govt; 1929 deleted from Lloyds; history unknown |
| Ganguil no.2 | completed December 1922 (y/n 221); 1929 deleted from Lloyds, subsequent history unknown. |
| Foremost VII | (photo above right) completed 24/1/1923 (y/n 222) for James Dredging; 1923 to GWR, 1948 to BTC, 1963 to BTDB; 1964 broken up at Briton Ferry. |



All are 598 tons gross, 283 tons net 160' loa x 30.1' beam, 14' moulded depth with 40' forecastle and 57' raised quarter deck; single screw with 88 nhp triple-expansion steam engine by J.I.Thornycroft, Southampton.

WHITES SHIPYARD (SOUTHAMPTON) LTD continued

TON-CLASS MINSWEEPERS

During the 1950's, the Royal Navy ordered new series of coastal and inshore minesweepers, including 118 'Ton'-class, 28 of which were later sold to Commonwealth and other navies. Designed from 1947 by the Naval Construction Department at Bath, the design was also offered to Canada, Netherlands and France. The lead constructor was John I Thornycroft, based just a few hundred yards down the Itchen, while Whites Shipyard were one of 15 other yards throughout the country involved in building

units of the class between 1951-60, other local builders included Thornycroft (12 units), Camper & Nicholson (16), Fleetlands (9) and Dorset Yacht at Poole (2).

The first to be delivered, **M1101 Coniston** from Thornycroft, was accepted in February 1953. The initial 44 were allocated insect names, then CMS numbers, but after March 1952 all were named after UK villages ending with 'ton', although some of the 20+ used by RNVR and other organisation were temporarily given 'non-ton' names.



The 'Ton' class have an aluminium framed, double mahogany planked, copper sheathed hull with non-magnetic fittings. The vessels had a standard displacement of 360 tons and a full load displacement of 440 tons on a hull 152ft (46.3m) overall, 140ft (42.7m) between perpendiculars with a beam of 28.75ft (8.8m) and a maximum draught of 8.25ft (2.5m). The RN ships were designed for 40mm Bofors forward and two 20mm AA aft, but were armed with one 40mm Bofors gun and one 20mm Oerlikon cannon, this often later replaced with a M2 Browning machine gun.

Machinery was twin screw high-speed diesels, the earlier units having twin Mirrlees, Bickerton & Day engines (2500bhp) and from M1130 onwards lightweight Napier Deltics (3000bhp), although some early units were later re-engined with Deltics, giving a maximum speed of 15 knots "with a clean hull and following wind and tide". Designed for a crew of 26, normally between 29-33 crew were carried, rising to 39 maximum during 'war-zone' operations.

The eleven "Ton"-class vessels constructed by Whites Shipyard between 1951 and 1958 were:

<i>Pennant</i>	<i>name</i>	<i>ordered</i>	<i>laid down</i>	<i>launched</i>	<i>completed</i>	<i>history and other names</i>
M1108	Bevington	09/09/50	13/09/51	17/03/53	10/04/54	l/dn as Golden Aphis ; 68 sold Argentina renamed Tierra del Fuego ; 1995 broken up
M1109	Bickington	09/09/50	21/09/51	14/05/52	25/05/54	l/dn as Red Bee ; 30/10/54 renamed Curzon (Sussex RNVR); 1960 Bickington during Deltic conversion; 1972 Killiecrankie (RNVR Forth); 1976 Bickington ; 8/88 broken up by Vickers.
M1126	Dalswinton	04/04/51	26/03/52	24/09/53	19/10/54	l/dn as Blue Cicala ; 1961-2 Montrose (RNVR Dundee); 11/72 sold to Willments; 73 resold and broken up by Pounds.
M1136	Fittleton	28/09/51	15/09/52	03/02/54	28/01/55	l/dn as Golden Cricket ?; 1955-60 in reserve at Hythe; 1960-62 commissioned as Curzon (Sussex RNVR); 1975 Fittleton ; 20/09/76 sank after RAS collision with HMS Mermaid off Dutch coast with loss of 12 crew; 1977 broken up at Sittingbourne
M1137	Flockton	28/09/51	19/03/53	03/06/54	07/10/55	l/dn as Red Dragonfly ?; 1955-60 in reserve at Hythe; 7/69 broken up at Queenborough, Kent
M1179	Sefton *	17/06/52	18/05/53	15/09/54	28/06/55	July 1968 sold and broken up at Bruges
M1180	Shavington	17/06/52	30/09/53	25/04/55	01/03/56	4/87 broken up at Cairnryan
M1181	Sheraton	17/06/52	23/02/54	20/07/55	24/08/56	64 converted to Minehunter; 93 paid-off; Jan 1998 to Pounds Marine for breaking
M1189	Wasperton		21/06/54	28/02/56	19/07/57	1971 converted to Hong Kong patrol vessel P1089 (same name) with minesweeping gear removed and additional 40mm Bofors; 1983 sold to Pounds Marine, who disposed of locally in Hong Kong
M1198	Ashton		14/10/54	05/09/56	15/04/58	l/dn as Cheriton ; 1974 paid-off; 6/77 broken up at Blythe
M1207	Castleton		1956	26/08/57	1958	1959 sold South Africa renamed Johannesburg ; 1989 broken up in Table Bay.

* some sources incorrectly refer to **M1179** as built at Fleetlands, Gosport

WHITES SHIPYARD (SOUTHAMPTON) LTD continued

THAMES PASSENGER FERRIES

In 1960, the company received what was probably their final significant newbuilding order, this being from British Transport Commission for three new passenger-only ferries for the short Tilbury to Gravesend crossing at a cost of about £740,000 each. The ferries were delivered in 1961 to eventually replace the vehicle ferry service, which was finally withdrawn in December 1964, after the opening of the first Dartford Tunnel in November 1963. The new vessels, having three hydraulic gangways on each side for rapid passenger disembarkation, were as follows:

Catherine launched 4/11/1960 for British Transport Commission; completed February 1961.
 214 gross tons 131 net tons 109' x 27' x 5' draught 300bhp 6-cyl Lister Blackstone to bridge-controlled Voith Schneider cycloidal single screw, 9 knots 475 deck passengers, 4 crew.
 1963 to British Rail Board; 1979 to Sealink UK Ltd; 1989 to River Tyne Cruises; 1990 converted to imitation stern-paddler as floating restaurant **Catherine Wheel**, paddles removed 1992;

2000 owners became Tyne Leisure Line; 2006 re-engined and reverted to **Catherine**; 2007 owners now River Escapes and renamed **River Escapes Latis** (180 px); since withdrawn

Edith completed 2/1961; details as above; 1963 to BRB; 1979 to Sealink UK Ltd (*photo right*); 1984 to Sea Containers Ltd; 5/90 to Stena Line; 1991 chartered to White Horse Ferries until **Great Expectations** was ready in 1992, then converted into houseboat near Tower Bridge and now at Great Wakering, Essex.



Rose launched 19/1/1961 (y/n 283) and completed 17/4/1961 for BTC (IMO 8434415) details as above; 1963 to BRB; 11/4/67 sold to Caledonian Steam Packet Co Ltd re-named **Keppel** for Largs-Millport service (341 px); 1969 to Scottish Transport Group; 1992 renamed **Clyde Rose**; 1995 renamed **Keppel** by Hornblower Co Ltd (Maltese flag) 2020 still reported in use as an excursion vessel in Malta.



(right) as **Keppel** off Malta in 2017 (Tom Walker).

NB: There is again confusion, even amongst some well-known writers, several of whom have referred to these three vessels as being built by J. Samuel White at Cowes.

What happened to the Whites Shipyard?

In the 1960's, the 20-acre site was sold to the Willment family and eventually became known as Willments Shipyard. The site was partly redeveloped with more modern industrial and warehousing units, although some of the older buildings were also retained. Following the death of one-time motor racing legend John Willment, the site was placed on the market in 2002 before being sold, together with the almost 18 acres of foreshore leased from the Crown Estate Commissioners.



The bulk carrier **Crimson Empress** 2014/82250dwt seen in the Western Docks on 12th August 2022
photo Nigel Robinson

LIMBURGIA

The three-funnel LIMBURGIA was one of three "Tirpitz" class near sisters being built at different yards at the start of World War I for the South American service of Hamburg-America Line.

As built, 19,980 grt 187.4 x 21.9m Triple screw, 17000 ihp triple expansion with 16 knot service speed. 1466 passengers in three classes and 480 crew

She was launched on 10 February 1914 as JOHANN HEINRICH BURCHARD by the Joh. C. Tecklenborg yard at Geestemunde (yard 256) and was completed on 20 November 1915. In 1916, as part of a German-Dutch Agreement to replace Dutch ships sunk by the Germans, she was sold to Royal Holland Lloyd for delivery at the end of the War. The Allied Powers did not recognise the Agreement, so when she finally left Bremerhaven in February 1920, as LIMBURGIA for handing over at Amsterdam, she was pursued by a British destroyer, which was lost in fog. After continuing

arguments, in 1922 she was sold to United American Lines of New York and renamed RELIANCE, but in 1926 was resold back to Hamburg-America. By 1928, she was only cruising, but in August 1938 caught fire and was abandoned as a CTL, finally being broken up in 1941 at Bremerhaven.

The two near-sisters were:

WILLIAM O'SWALD
A.G.Weser,
Bremen

1916 sold to Royal Holland Lloyd (as above)
1920 renamed BRABANTIA; 1922 sold United American renamed RESOLUTE; 1926 sold back to Hamburg-America for cruising; 1935 sold to Italian Gov't as troopship LOMBARDIA; 1943 burnt out and sank at Naples; 1946 broken up.
ADMIRAL VON TIRPITZ 'Vulkan' shipyard, Stettin
twin-screw steam turbine; 1914 renamed TIRPITZ; 1920 completed and 1921 to Canadian Pacific and renamed EMPRESS OF CHINA, then 1922 renamed EMPRESS OF AUSTRALIA; 1952 broken up at Inverkeithing.

DTH



A – Z of Sail

by Michael Page

*For the letter “F” I have chosen the **FLYING CLOUD***

Length - 235 feet.. Breadth - 41 feet. Depth - 21.5 feet.

Gross tonnage -1782. Net tonnage -1098.

The Flying Cloud of 1851 was the most famous of the extreme clippers built by Donald McKay in East Boston, Massachusetts intended for Enoch Train of Boston, who paid US\$50,000 for her construction.

Flying Cloud was purchased at launching by Grinnell, & Co of New York. Within six weeks she sailed from New York and made San Francisco round Cape Horn in 89 days, 21 hours under the command of Captain Josiah Perkins Creesy. On the 31st July, during the trip, she made 374 miles in 24 hours.

In 1853 she beat her own record by 13 hours, a record that stood until 1989 when the breakthrough designed sailboat **Thursdays Child** completed the passage of 80 days, 20 hours. As of 2007 **Thursdays Child** still holds this record, which is called the Flying Cloud record.

In the early days of the California Gold Rush, it took more than 200 days for a ship to travel from New York to San Francisco, a voyage of more than 16,000 miles. **Flying Cloud** more than halving that time (only 89 days) was a headline-grabbing world record that the ship itself beat three years later, setting a record that lasted for 136 years.

This record breaking of **Flying Cloud** was remarkable under any terms because its Navigator was a woman Eleanor Creesy, who had been studying oceanic currents, weather phenomena and astronomy since her childhood in Marblehead, Massachusetts. She was one of the first navigators to exploit the insights of Matthew Fontaine Maury, most notably the course recommended in his Sailing Directions. With her husband Captain Josiah Perkins Creesy, she logged many thousands of miles, travelling around the world carrying passengers and goods. In the wake of their record-setting transit from New York to California Eleanor and Josiah became instant celebrities but their fame was short lived and their story quickly forgotten. Josiah died in 1871 and Eleanor lived far from the sea until her death in 1900.



On 19th June 1874 the **Flying Cloud** went ashore on the Beacon Island, Newfoundland and was condemned and sold. The following June she was burned for the scrap metal value of her copper and metal fastenings.

*A beautiful impression of **Flying Cloud** under full sail from a painting by Jack Spurling (1870-1933),*