

West Wales Maritime Heritage Society

Spring Newsletter 2013

The main purpose of this newsletter is to publish our list of future activities. There has been no activity afloat since the autumn newsletter. However, the important work to maintain the fleet has continued and we expect to restart sailing fairly soon.

Just as last season's sailing was hampered by awful rain; the winter activities have been restricted by the late, cold snap. With the shed doors open, the workshop has been bitterly cold and no one has wanted to work for too long, even as the daylight hours have lengthened.

The committee and library work has continued, mostly unseen, but we are making progress in important projects.

Diary dates.

- 10th/11th May 2013. WWMHS will be joining Pembroke Dock Sunderland Trust, Coastal command and Maritime Air Association and the Maritime Air Trust in a 70th Anniversary of the Battle of the Atlantic weekend. We will have a display in Pater Hall, Dimond Street, from 10 am to 4 pm and the Society's yard at Front Street will be open to show visitors what we do. There will be four, guided walks, all of which begin at the Pater Hall. They will be:
 - Friday 10th:
 - 11 am Ted Goddard: *Maritime Reflections: Hancocks to Hobbs Point*
 - 2 pm John Evans: *Reminders of the RAF*
 - Saturday 11th:
 - 11 am Brian Pratt: *In The Steps Of Pigs' Parade*
 - 2 pm David James: *Stepping Stones in Maritime History*
- 8th June 2013. Bi-Centenary of the acquisition of land for Pembroke Dock. Saturday 8 June 2013 at Asda Car park slipway, in Pembroke Dock. 200 years ago, a party of surveyors landed in Pembroke Dock to survey the site of the new dockyard. A local tenant farmer fired his blunderbuss over the heads of the survey party. Our society is organising the re-enactment. We expect that the fleet will be led by The John Kerr, and that a local theatrical group will provide the action on shore.
- 17th Aug 2013. Pembroke River Rally. The Society will guide a fleet up The Pembroke River into The Castle Pool to exercise and maintain the historic right of navigation. The fleet will be on display to the public before some depart downriver while others stay overnight in The Pool. The timing of this event depends on the rise and fall of the tide. We need the council to lower and raise the Pembroke River Barrage in order to sail into and out from The Pool.

- 21st Sep 2013. We will hold a Joint Conference in Swansea with The South West Maritime History Society.
- 15th/16th Oct 2013. We will be part of a two day Mini Conference in Swansea.
- 7th to 14th June 2014. Sea fair Haven. Pembroke Town Council have agreed to act as host port for the event which will include activities at many locations in The Haven.
- 9th Aug 2014. Pembroke Dock's Bicentenary. "The Party on the Pill". The party will be centred on The East Lannion Slipway and will showcase local sailing clubs, water sports and maritime heritage.

Winter maintenance.

The transom on General Picton has been almost completely replaced, mostly by Stuart. With the paintwork restored the boat is ready for the water.



The work on Undine is nearing completion. The engine has been overhauled and is ready for installation. There was unexpected corrosion in the ignition coil, so the ignition system has been replaced with an electronic system.



Here Chris is installing a stainless bar to lock the bottom planks to the new pitch pine strengtheners.

There are still lots of jobs to finish her off, but the work is on schedule.

The sailing dingy, Linnet, has had a lot of small areas of rot repaired and here Tony is preparing her for some new paint.



The engines need their annual checks before being used afloat.



Library.

Joan and Ruth continue to update the catalogue and repair damaged books. The dehumidifier has done an excellent job in stopping condensation damage. The Froyne Journals are in Narbeth Museum's excellent archive while they raise additional funds to extend their displays.

Maritime Heritage Centre.

We have had preliminary meetings with Pembroke County Council and other interested parties about establishing a Maritime Heritage Centre. Everyone is very supportive and recognises the success that other communities have enjoyed in using Maritime Heritage as a vehicle for urban regeneration. Our preferred location would be our present historic dockyard, but financial considerations might override our choices. We are bidding for funds, but if we publish all of our plans we might endanger the ventures success.

We are meeting the marina developer soon and our plans will depend on how their plans develop. We are working with Pembroke Town Council to establish a museum in Pembroke and with Pembroke Dock Museum Trust to extend Pembroke Dock Museum.

The Tenby Lugger, Margaret.

We continue to write our bid for Heritage Lottery Funds to have the last Tenby Lugger, Margaret, professionally restored. However, the bid has to include a detailed business plan about how it will be used (to show that the money will not be wasted). This drags us into complicated requirements that take time to resolve. The old joke, about the paperwork weighing as much as the boat, might not be a joke after all!

Follow us on Facebook.

The Society's Facebook page is updated regularly. I am encouraged to see that we have supporters and visitors around the world. I try to update the page every two weeks or so.

Local maritime friends include the Marine Volunteer Service, Milford Haven Port Authority, Sea Cadet Corps, Sunderland Trust, The Prince's Trust. And the Town councils of Pembroke, Pembroke Dock and Haverfordwest.

Our more distant friends include MOROL (The Institute of Welsh Maritime History Studies, where we have a seat on the board.), Maritime Heritage Wales Trust, Mystic Seaport Museum (USA), Senor Xabier Agote (Spain), Dyfed Archaeology, the Nautical Archaeology Society and The Beagle Trust.

Brian King

April 2013