

STEAMSHIP

FRESHSPRING

TRUST

MAGAZINE



No.24 Autumn 2020

Preserving the past to inspire knowledge for the future

The Steamship Freshspring Trust is a registered charity, No.1151907.

Objects of the Charity:

To advance the education of the public through the preservation and operation of a historic steamship, and the promotion of maritime studies particularly amongst young people for the public benefit.

Registered Office: Little Cleave, Lower Cleave, Northam, Devon, EX39 2RH

Patrons: The Earl Attlee TD; Rear Admiral Nigel Guild CB CEng FREng;
Captain Kevin Slade CMMar FNI.

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Keep up to date with progress/news via the Trust's website or Facebook page.

Website: www.ssfreshspring.co.uk
Facebook: www.facebook.com/SSFreshspringTrust?fref=ts

Membership Enquiries: Please send an s.a.e. for a form to: Steamship Freshspring Trust, c/o Richard Ker, 4 New Street, Appledore, Devon, EX39 1QJ, or you can join online.

Ship Visits & Volunteering on the ship: The ship is currently closed to the public due to Coronavirus. However, members may visit by prior appointment, usually on a Wednesday or a Sunday. Please call Peter Gillett, our Local Ship Manager, on 01237 237 183 (email: peter.gillett@ssfreshspring.co.uk) if you are interested in volunteering.

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Editor's Ramblings. . . .

Welcome to this edition of the *Freshspring Magazine*. Yet again, we have some interesting stories from a few of our members, all with a maritime bent. I am sure there are many of you out there who have interesting lives – or interests – that would entertain our fellow members. You don't have to have maritime links; anything will do!



This year's Annual General Meeting was certainly different! Rather than us sitting in a room with 50-60 members, a smaller number joined the first ever virtual AGM. It was a strange experience joining others via a computer link and not being able to participate fully in the meeting. However, we had a legal obligation to hold the AGM and this has been done, so it's on into the next year. There are certainly challenges ahead but we have a great team whose professionalism is the envy of many other organisations. There is a real determination to make things happen and this attitude is common to volunteers, trustees and patrons alike. There is no doubt that ultimately we will succeed in our objectives.

Brian Gooding



Water storage and pressure washing equipment being delivered. All funded by Members, Kevin Slade, Peter Rowett Hawthorns and John Puddy.

FRONT COVER: *Another Bristol-era shot of Freshspring that Stephen has managed to acquire. I would guess that it is the bow of the mv Balmoral to the extreme left.*

From the Chair

Since my last report our lives have changed considerably and our day to day routines have been affected by the need to remain cautious and to remember to take face masks with us when going out. At least now we can go out and even meet a few friends.

Life at *SS Freshspring* has gained some momentum as volunteers are slowly coming back to work safely on board. They seem very pleased to be able to get out again and the atmosphere on board is conducive to a positive social but socially distant time. An important role we play is to provide social interaction and friendship for quite a few people, who otherwise would be isolated.

If you have been looking at the blog, you will see that Pete is progressing very well with the mast. He is just finishing off the tapered section at the top and then we can get on with having the ironwork made. Fortunately, our good friends at Trinity House have provided a grant of £4,000 to support rigging, ironwork and even equipment to take visitors to the top. Once fitted, *SS Freshspring* really will look as she should.

The sailmakers have returned to work and are making the awning, which we hope to have by September. We might even be able to hold a few small events in the autumn.

As you know, we have an aim to promote careers in the maritime sector and as we clap to recognise our key workers and NHS, we should spare a thought for our mariners. Many have had little choice but to remain on their ships for extended periods as passenger transport has closed down or they have been forced to remain home. Either way, it is a stressful situation often resulting in mental strain or anxiety. My son Tom is one of these who has struggled to get to his ship, his opposite serving for twice his normal time. Without mariners, our supermarket shelves would be empty and fuel stations would run dry. With over 90% of everything being transported by sea, mariners are high up in key worker status but remain, to an extent forgotten. Next time you clap, remember them.

The Maritime Skills Commission has been set up by the Government as part of its maritime 2050 strategy to understand the skills needs within the maritime sector and to ensure skills shortages are addressed. Our seagoing workforce has been in decline for many years which has led to shortages and pressures in maritime. During the past 40 years, the number of British officers has declined by some two-thirds; this is predicted to further decline by 30% within ten years. Government statistics show that almost one third of British Masters and 20% of engineer officers are 60 or over. During the 1980s, cadet intake dipped to just 100 in one year and since, many studies have been conducted to show numbers needed to reduce the risk of long term skills shortages. Most studies have analysed companies and services which class maritime expertise desirable or essential. These studies highlight a target figure of 1,000 to 1,650 cadets annually. UK cadet training programmes need to develop training and employment of officer trainees. It is also a fact that our seafarers are held in high regard internationally and remain very much in demand. To maintain this enviable

situation, it is necessary to uphold and enhance our high standards and to do all we can to protect the reputation and integrity of our maritime education. Of course, a major role of the Trust is to engage with children from an early age to show them the opportunities that exist in maritime. We start at primary school right through to school events and career shows. We are working to partner with other organisations to ensure that those we engage with can obtain all the advice and support needed to enter a worthwhile maritime career. We are always amazed at how few people even consider maritime as a career choice, when it has so much going for it.

We are disappointed that we cannot safely open the ship at present, particularly now that holiday makers have started to flood into the area, many walking past the ship with great interest. We hope that with the new awning and support of UWE and BMT, we will soon have a virtual reality tour in place. Our website is also having a major makeover as the internet is progressively taking over our lives. We have managed a few meetings using zoom, but they are not the same as getting together. We miss the banter.

The AGM is over and what a strange one it was. It lasted all of half an hour. Thanks to those of you who attended and listened to my monologue. I am pleased that we have brought in new trustees to help move the Trust into the future. During the year we have lost some Trustees too: Karen Evans, John Austin and both Jon and Becky Short. It is always disappointing to lose Trustees and our aim is to replace those who leave with at least equal skills. Of course, as the trust develops, we need new skills and this a key element of our new Trustees. I would like to thank you for allowing me to Chair the Trust for another year. I'm very humbled by your support for me in this role and I will do my best to ensure the Trust continues to develop and to progressively improve education services and our unique ship. Although the ship is closed, we welcome member visits, as long as they are pre-arranged.

Simon has created two excellent reports on the state of the Trust. One thing, of course, is that the revenue we get via members, events and from visitors is classed as free. This means we can use it to our best advantage and is the most difficult cash to fund raise for. It is essential money as we use it for match funding and for the everyday bills which essentially keep the Trust afloat. Thank you so much to all of you who donate so regularly and freely; without you much essential work could simply not happen.

Simon also mentions Mike Blackman, saying "every Trust should have a Mike". This is almost an understatement as Mike has delivered the best Lottery evaluation reports and successfully keeps us all on our toes regarding statutory and essential requirements. His role in the Trust continues to develop towards the creation of an ever more professional organisation. It is difficult to highlight one person as we have an amazing team, with essential and diverse skills, with Anne Budd somehow managing the mind boggling vagaries of IT, including a demanding website refresh, Val who is constantly chasing us for reports and time recording and, of course, Pete, who manages the ship in an extraordinary manner which makes her almost magnetic. It is

impossible to leave without smiling at the experience. He, of course, gains help from his elusive friend, Scuttlebutt.

Charlotte is now back from furlough, which is a great relief to us all. As Project Manager, her role is expanding as our professional employee. We will all benefit from this and I am confident that our work as a Trust will be greatly enhanced. We had our first meeting (amazingly, in person) on the 5th August to set out goals for the future.

I hope you enjoy this edition of the magazine, the reports and very interesting articles it contains. I am sure we all have the same aims, seeing our ship work again and to support many people in the process to gain meaningful employment and valued careers in maritime and engineering. It is so gratifying to be involved in a Trust which affects positively so many peoples lives.

Thank you all for being a part of the winning, TeamFreshspring.

Stay safe and well.

John

Trust Matters

The three months since my last report have, as I expected, seen many changes as a result of the Covid situation. The future is still clouded with a great deal of uncertainty but there have been many positives as we continue to move forward.

Annemarie Shillito

In May we co-opted Annemarie Shillito as a Trustee. One of the keys to survival for any charity is fundraising and, although we have been remarkably successful over the last few years, we have always wanted to find someone with a proven fundraising track record to lead our team. Annemarie is that person and she has already been working hard on a number of grant applications – and I suspect we'll keep her very busy!

Trustees

I'm very pleased to say that the three Trustees co-opted during the year – Huw Davies, Richard Ker and Annemarie Shillito – were all elected at the AGM. More reporting of the AGM appears elsewhere. A successful charity needs Trustees who have a range of skills, who are willing and able to contribute to the decision making processes of running an organisation, who will actively participate in ensuring that the decisions are implemented and work well collectively. I think we have an excellent team!

Charlotte

As from 1st August, Charlotte has returned from furlough and resumes her normal two days a week – though perhaps 'normal' is not quite the right word. First, she is no longer employed by TTVS and has become the Trust's first employee – a milestone in itself!

Although her job description remains Project Manager – she was employed to manage the, now finished, Our Heritage lottery grant – over time she will take on more of the day-to-day management of the Trust allowing some Trustees to step back a bit and concentrate more on the job of developing and directing the Trust. Also, her work pattern may change from two days a week to part of most / every working day – whatever works best as we progress. We shall all be helping her to develop her role and skills.

Mike Blackman

With the end of the Our Heritage grant, I want to mention Mike's contribution. Mike joined us as a volunteer several years ago and took on the job of monitoring and looking after the financial side of this Lottery project. He also agreed to create much of the reporting to be submitted at the end of the project. This turned out to be an enormous task and the report produced was outstanding – far more thorough and comprehensive than I imagine the Lottery expected and a great source of information for the future. Every charity needs a Mike and I'm looking forward to his exacting skills benefitting *Freshspring* as we progress.

The Future

In the last report I said I needed a crystal ball and that is still the case!

Over the last weeks we have been very active in applying for a number of grants to get us through until Spring 2021 which, realistically, is probably the earliest we are going to be able to open the ship to the public and resume normal activity. My Treasurer's Report outlines more about what we are doing to ensure our financial survival.

We are continuing with all the actions outlined in my previous report and I am confident of our ability to survive this difficult period and come out of it as a stronger, more resilient organisation.

Simon Tattersall

August 2020

Treasurer's Report

I started off my last report in May by saying that we would not be holding an AGM this year. That situation changed when the Government introduced legislation which made it compulsory for us to do so – though how we did it was very much up to us – and we circulated a summary of the accounts as part of the AGM package. One member did ask for more details about the grant expenditure of £49,483 and our Restricted Funds so I'll start this report by a broader explanation of those costs.

Grant Expenditure

We started the Our Heritage grant in January 2018 to run for a two year period. The total expenditure budgeted was £118,746 and covered 20 different cost categories. The largest were salaries of £38,664, Wheelhouse restoration of £28,110, ship new build work of £15,069, signage of £4,853, fees and contingency of £15,055 and several costs relating to aspects of education making up the balance. To meet this total cost, the Lottery would provide £60,100 in stage payments, we obtained match funding from other donors of £45,000 and the balance of £13,646 was to be provided by *Freshspring*.

In the financial year ending 31st January 2020, our expenditure towards this grant was £29,088 on salaries, £2,300 on the *Wish Fish* book, £1,412 on banners and the balance of £16,683 on a myriad of separate amounts covering the other expenditure categories. The grant work finished in the current financial year, as the end date was extended, and most of that cost will be salaries.

Restricted Funds

In previous years we have only treated funds held for the Our Heritage grant as Restricted, but this does not really give a true picture of our financial position. We have contractual debts, money received for specific projects not yet spent and we also need to set aside funds – in accounting terms this is called a Sinking Fund, which is rather appropriate for *Freshspring* – to provide against emergencies and regular dry dock maintenance.

Presenting this more accurate picture meant simply re-allocating total funds (money in the bank) between the Restricted and Unrestricted headings – a re-allocation agreed by our independent Accounts Examiner. What this new division of funds also means is that, every month, I need to set aside £833 as the contribution to the Sinking Fund as we want to build up a reserve of £60,000 every six years. If we don't need to spend it, so much the better!

Current Financial Position

As at 31st July 2020, we had £61,274 in the bank, most of which will be classified as Restricted, meaning there is some pressure to raise funds to cover our necessary overhead costs. We are addressing this problem in a number of ways.

- First, we have applied to the Lottery for funding from their Covid Emergency fund. If we are successful – and we won't know until perhaps mid-August – this grant should cover our overheads (but not a contribution to our reserves) for four months. As part of this grant application we have requested funding (of nearly £100,000) to pay for the two studies required to establish on what basis *Freshspring* may sail again, or whether she will always remain a static vessel. Obtaining this funding – if we get it – will be a major step forward.
- Second, we will be applying for Lottery funding from a 'follow-on' Covid fund aimed at keeping charities going through until the end of March 2021. Again this may only cover overheads, not necessarily 'lost' income.
- Third, we have applied for grants from a number of other donors that are trying to help Heritage or educational organisations like us get through a difficult period of either nil or greatly reduced income.
- Fourth, we are re-purposing a couple of grants offered to us before lockdown started.
- Fifth, we are being very careful about how we spend what funds we have and we are seeking help from anyone / any organisation that might be willing to offer support – financial or otherwise.

To put the scale of our problem into perspective, we normally expect to attract donations and small grants of about £20,000 per year from visitors, talks, fundraising events and other activities. The combination of Covid and social distancing is likely to cost us at least £15,000 in lost income this financial year. We will get through it, but we are likely to have to use some of our reserves to do so.

Recognising Help

Over the last few years, many people – members and well-wishers – have given us money for specific projects, the two most notable being funds for replacing the broken generator and the commissioning of the deck awning. We have recognised this generosity by creating a plaque with donors' names but as the generator, for instance, is rarely seen by the public, nor is the plaque. We are now thinking of creating a board – name, size and type of construction undecided – on which ALL plaques will be fixed for public display on the ship. This seems a far more appropriate way of saying 'thank you'!

Finally....

Some members – having realised that their bank account contains more money than normal because they haven't been going out – have kindly made donations to *Freshspring*. If you feel you could do the same, our bank account details are:

Steamship Freshspring Trust, Sort Code 40.52.40, Account Number 00023232.

Thank you for helping!!

Simon Tattersall

August 2020

Project Manager's Report

At the beginning of lockdown, I stopped coming up to Bideford and carried on my work from home with regular communication with Simon, John and Anne. Working from home has never been an issue for me, but add home schooling into the mix and everything becomes a little bit more complicated.

The decision to furlough me in May was the right decision for the Trust, as the projects that we had lined up were public facing and impossible to carry out during lockdown. It also made good economic sense to let the furlough scheme cover my salary from May to the end of July.

What stood out for me when furloughed was that even though I only work for the Trust two days a week, a lot of my thinking time revolves around *Freshspring*. Without this work, initially I felt a bit lost, but my children soon found plenty of things for me to do.

Returning to work from the 1st August, I'm now looking forward to resuming my work routine and focusing back onto the future of *Freshspring*. I think flexibility of thought will be key, as our original plans for this year are not currently possible.

Once we have established the best way forward, we need to adapt our website and documentation to reflect this. Our aim is to find positives, rather than dwell on the negative impact of the lockdown. We are ideally suited to supporting the unemployed with structured volunteering opportunities; this is something that we already do well, but could be developed in partnership with other organisations. We should grow our education programmes to support the blended learning that may become the new normal for the next academic year. We need to provide access to *Freshspring* in new ways and establish revenue streams from these virtual visits. We must grow existing funding relationships and find new funding streams to support our current and future work.

The challenges are multiple and complex, but the Steamship *Freshspring* Trust wouldn't be where it is today without a can do attitude, drive and adaptability. I have every faith that *Freshspring* will find her path through these uncertain times.

Charlotte Squire

New members

We welcome the following new member of the Trust:

Sir Neil Cossons

Rushbury, Shropshire

Nigel Cossons

Chester

Mike Teare

Bideford, Devon

Scuttlebutt from the Quay

Even in these strangest of strange times, some things don't change. It's as true now as ever it was that you shouldn't wrestle (or possibly dance) with a chimney sweep. The state of our colleague Stephen as he emerged from a stint in the Boiler Room was evocative of old photos of miners leaving the pithead, blinking in the daylight, a black and white testament to the past. No-one would have chosen to wrestle or even dance with Stephen that day.

Cleaning the boiler, prior to an inspection, is going to be a long and dirty job involving volunteers and possibly contractors. The ideal candidates need to be as slim and supple as a ferret with unusually long arms (certainly unusual for a ferret) and no hint of claustrophobia. The lucky few among our ranks to qualify will no doubt be rewarded with ribald comments and the offer of a prolonged squirt from our new pressure washer.

The pressure washer, presently resplendent in its cardboard box, is part of our programme to repaint the hull. We called in the expertise of a professional mud-dweller to do the initial work with industrial quality kit and an assortment of old garden tools for the barnacles. Again we need volunteers supple and agile beyond their years, and again long arms would be helpful although we do have one telescopic decorator's pole they can fight over.

The thing about pressure washers is that they can use a lot of water, and although the ship sits in a river, we can't rely on the tide staying in long enough to be useful to us. The first phase of the job consumed in excess of five tons of water so we have upped our game a little now and have acquired two large(ish) water tanks, one for the ship and one to go on a trailer, along with appropriate hoses, fittings and a submersible pump. This is deeply ironic when the ship's role was that of a water tender, but our tanks are now dry and we're fully off grid.

Despite the current situation, we have been impressed with the resilience of our volunteers. Most of our stalwarts have returned to at least half days and we have been blessed with some new volunteers. We now have Neil, ex-shipyard and mechanically minded, who has been looking after the main engine for us. We also have Lou, a local artist who helped with the creation of our souvenir guide, expressing her love of abstract painting by highlighting all our numerous trip hazards in brightly contrasting colours.

Of our core volunteers special mention must go to George who has hardly missed a Wednesday; Bill, Brian and Dr John who have turned up most Sundays and Dave, Dave and Malcolm who turn up and do things anytime the ship is open.

The new mast is nearing completion, albeit slowly. It is now roundish and tapered at the top. This has involved the equivalent of pushing or pulling sharp tools of various descriptions for nearly the distance of a marathon. This has been much like whittling a full-grown tree into a telegraph pole without the prospect of fast broadband at the end, but as a form of therapy and care in the community, it has been without parallel.

Pete Gillett

2020 AGM minutes

Chair opened the Meeting at 2.02pm on 1st August and welcomed members.

Apologies: Earl Attlee, John Austin, Graham Mimms.

Attendance: 16 members.

Minutes: members were provided with minutes previously and asked to vote by 30th July. There were 48 votes to sign off the minutes, none against and one withheld. Minutes signed as accepted.

Chair report: See Achievements and Performance, and Chair report for details. Generally, I am pleased with the performance of the Trust over the year to include activity during this pandemic period. Our challenges will not cease and I am very pleased to be able to report that Charlotte Squire returns from furlough as our Project Manager. The Trust has moved on and now needs a professional manager to ensure we meet our objectives. Trustees and volunteers cannot continue to entirely manage this project.

Chair mentioned the future of the ship and the potential for hybrid power, retaining the original steam equipment but with a ship capable of moving efficiently with an emphasis on the environment.

2019 was a bumper year for visitors and events and I hope we can continue this progress.

We have applied to NLHF for a Covid-related grant which will support our essential feasibility and viability studies and the virtual reality project.

We have been supported by UWE and BMT Global who are providing the expertise to create virtual reality and in-kind support provided amounts to some £5,000.

Forward plan:

1. To continue to develop the Trust and its education and career support for engineering and maritime.
2. To continue raising funds for the development and renovation of the ship.
3. To investigate and pursue technology to enable people to engage virtually.
4. To administer the Trust according to our objectives.

Financial report:

Report submitted by Simon Tattersall.

You will have seen that we have decided to put funds aside to prepare for dry docking the ship or emergency hull repairs. This ensures that the ship has a planned schedule of hull maintenance to maintain watertight integrity.

Agreement of statement of accounts: 48 for, 0 against, 2 withheld.

Election results:

Chair handed over to Stephen Attenborough.

To Appoint Huw Davies, 49 for, 0 against, 1 withheld.

To Appoint Richard Ker, 48 for, 0 against, 1 withheld.

To Appoint Annemarie Shillito, 48 for, 0 against, 2 withheld.

To reappoint John Cooper, 37 for, 3 against, 9 withheld.

To reappoint John Puddy, 48 for, 0 against, 1 withheld.

To reappoint John Puddy as Chair, 48 for, 0 against, 1 withheld.

Chair resumes the meeting.

Members questions:

There were no questions from members. Chair pointed out that, as this was a one way meeting, and members should contact him by mail or telephone if they wished to discuss any points.

Summing up and how members can help:

We are sorry that this AGM is not a social event; please rest assured, we will strive to provide a bumper AGM in 2021.

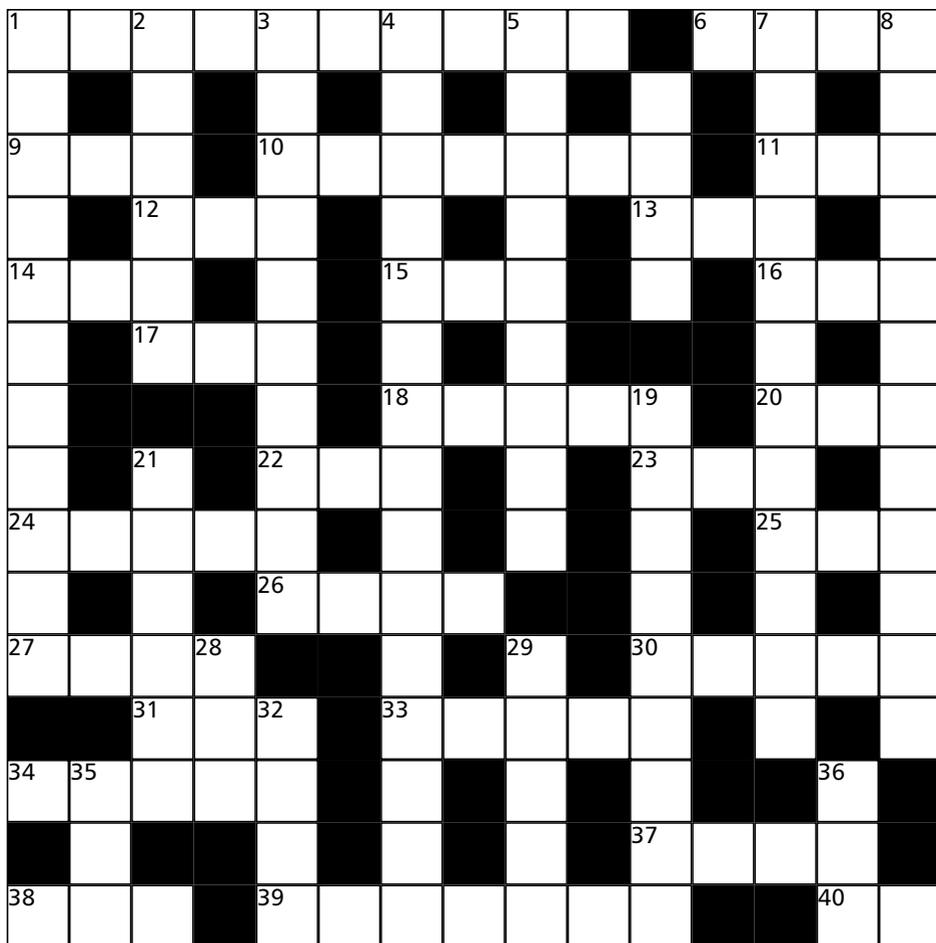
During the past year members have been very supportive of the Trust and funded valuable specific projects. We sincerely thank you for that support. We also thank members for the ad hoc donations we regularly receive.

Chair thanked Brian Gooding very much for creating an excellent magazine. We always need articles and will be pleased to receive them from members. We consider any subject as we wish to ensure the magazine is of general interest. We also ask members to continue to spread the word to gain support and increase membership.

Last year we proposed a members' think tank to help us to decide on matters to both renovate our ship and to develop the Trust. We would welcome this becoming a feature of the Trust.

Even though the ship is closed to the public, Members are always welcome to visit the ship in ones or twos by appointment. We are always on board on a Wednesday and a Sunday. Do come if you are in the area or if you would like to visit.

Thank you very much for attending the meeting and we look forward to a bumper event next year.



Clues

Across

- 1 Mad love, re nuts who work on Freshspring (10)
- 6 Plimsoll water level adjuster? (4)
- 9 Yank powerful little boat (3)
- 10 Poor hen confused and going nowhere (2,5)
- 11 Plimsoll again! (3)
- 12 Short enclosure in letter (3)
- 13 Emulate primate (3)
- 14 Compact road surface, it's a joke! (3)
- 15 One Italian car (3)
- 16 Smuggle yet also manage (3)
- 17 Mother holds water back (3)
- 18 Vagrant coastal steamer (5)
- 20 Ms Stubbs acted in 'Sherlock', straight (3)
- 22 German scientist measures resistance (3)
- 23 Make a mistake and hesitate on phone (3)
- 24 Mexican wrap enables driver to keep log (5)
- 25 Ferdinand is big in Brazil (3)
- 26 French sea captain stands here I expect (4)
- 27 Expensive sounding cervid (4)
- 30 One who longs to find Queen's four digit code (5)
- 31 Reverse crude conflict (3)
- 33 Half a RN water tender leaves somewhat full of beans (5)
- 34 Ski run sounding inebriated (5)

- 37. Navigational hazard formed by spliff without hesitation (4)
- 38. A thousand in South Africa make dance music (3)
- 39. Overheard Famous Thomas Lawrence painting to be kept on port going out (3,4)
- 40. Half a ballet garment? Is you familiar?

Down

- 1. Dave put tie rave in disarray to have scolded (11)
- 2. Can be a foot or a bottom, in any case just an old story (6)
- 3. End of email provider's address on rear deck follows best part of nine for incompetent fool (10)
- 4. Wear out many where spent gases exit i.e. engine (7,8)
- 5. He's a scoundrel with respect to legal protection (9)
- 7. Sub text often felt as tide recedes (12)
- 8. Traditional naval welcome too hot on ship (6,6)
- 19. Confused Greek character and Elizabeth are taken in by Mr Como outside edge (9)
- 21. Prison officers drive Freshspring (5)
- 28. Seafarer up scoundrel? (3)
- 29. Indian chief? (5)
- 32. Certain type of admiral at the back? (4)
- 35. Irish thousand annoy (3)
- 36. Frequently somewhat archaic (3)

The solution may be found on page 33.

Latest report from Tom Puddy, seafarer

I am pleased to be able to report in the *Freshspring Magazine* again about my life at sea. Seafarers have wide ranging careers and I have moved from cruise ships to super yachts, a very different environment. Matt Wakeham, who also writes in this magazine, has a quite different life at sea but equally as interesting and challenging. Being at sea is a great life and we experience countries and ways of life that most people cannot even comprehend.

COVID affected many seafarers around the world, whether they were stuck on board or at home. I see myself as one of the lucky ones who was stuck at home during the quarantine, rather than those stuck for long months on board ships.

For me, the lockdown came between jobs. I had just handed in my resignation at a previous yacht and was waiting to join another, this time my first as Chief Electro Technical Officer. The date for me to join the new yacht was pushed back and back, as the situation continued, and countries shut their borders to control the outbreak.

At the point of my joining, my opposite who I would be replacing, had been on board for over four months, rather than his routine two.

Due to the high chance of contamination between crew members on board a ship, very strict measures were taken to bring about a crew change safely.

The crew changeover was done all at once; close to thirty crew members, geared with masks, gloves and hand sanitiser, were flown from around the world to meet in Mexico. We stayed one day and a night in a hotel in Mexico City – a COVID hotspot at that point – before taking another flight to a coastal town to await the vessel.

We were then put up in isolated hotel rooms to quarantine and await the ship for ten days. The apartments we were put in were very lovely, but we could only gaze longingly at the off-limits pool outside. We were confined to our rooms with an hour in the morning and evening to get some fresh air. Throughout the stay we went through several nasal swab tests for COVID, an unpleasant experience which reached parts of my sinuses I didn't know were there.

Thankfully all crew members came through without any positive test results and we were safe to join the ship.

Since I was starting a new and challenging position, I joined a day before the other crew members in order to squeeze in as much time for my handover as possible. Even this was cut short to two days, as the vessel had to depart early to avoid rough weather conditions which were imminently approaching.

Over the two long days and late evenings before he flew home, my opposite and I went over as many of the systems on board as possible and aimed to give me a rough history of the on going jobs and expected events to come up.

Two days later, the yacht set off for the 12 day voyage from Mexico, across the Pacific towards the French Polynesian Islands. I used this time to learn as much about the layout and systems of the vessel. The systems between my previous yacht and this

one were, of course, similar in purpose, but with different manufacturers there was still plenty to learn to get a head start on fault finding and maintenance.

The lighting circuits we take for granted at home, with a flick of a switch, are typically much more complicated on board. With integrated dimming, scene changes and a central computer controlling everything, this is an important thing to get to grips with as soon as possible.

On arrival at French Polynesia, we had a rush to get the yacht ready for an upcoming guest trip. A lot of long hours went into getting everything in order which couldn't be done whilst at sea. Spare parts were waiting for us and things needed to be fitted.

Days were spent replacing underwater lights in an inflatable raft, with Alex, once college house mate and now ship mate, swimming in the water to assist, with a snorkel and mask on. I also once again found myself perched at the top of the high mast changing a weather sensor, peering down at the deck seemingly far below.

The appearance of the luxury interior guest area is a very high priority. Painstaking efforts are made by all the crew to ensure everything is operating perfectly, with no knocking or squeaking, no lights out and no possible combination of guest interaction that wouldn't go as they would wish. The housekeeping team work to make sure every



Tom joining the yacht.



Changing underwater lights.

piece of chrome is blindingly polished and not a speck of dust to be found anywhere, while the deck team outside scrub the wooden teak decks and buff the hull paintwork to a gleaming finish.

The hard prep work paid off, with a busy guest trip passing filled with fun activities for them, mostly involving water: jet skis, wake board and diving. The guests left very happy and wishing to return for a future trip.

With the first cruise down, there was no time to relax as we had a two day turn around to prepare for the yacht owner to come for a trip. More long days were spent getting everything back to the perfect standards expected.

As always, things fail at the worst times, so despite all the preparations, equipment breaks down and electronics fail unexpectedly. With guests on board, the role of the technical department is to keep everything running without being seen. We are given the go ahead to sneak around while the guests are out on trips to the beach or enjoying their breakfast in other areas of the yacht.

The yacht's private tenders are a key role in the activities on board and there is always great haste to get them up and running. The perk of which is, once repairs have been carried out, they have got to be taken for a test spin around the blue waters of the Polynesian Islands!

Lifeline for Appledore Lifeboat

The tide has turned for the *Jane Hanna MacDonald III*, an Appledore lifeboat that has saved many lives and is now being saved herself.

In 2019, John Vistuer, an enthusiast from Appledore in North Devon, discovered the self-righting man-powered lifeboat in a boatyard in France – a rotting wreck.

Jane Hanna MacDonald III was built by the Thames Iron Works & Ship Building Company, London, in 1909 and first launched from Bideford Quay in August 1910.

She served in the RNLI in Appledore, from August 1910 to November 1922, saving 23 lives. She went on to be one of the small ships collecting our troops from the Dunkirk beaches in 1940 (Operation Dynamo) but then ceased to be used and eventually ended up abandoned in France.

Three local businessmen, Simon & James Morris and Rob Braddick, with the support of John Puddy and Richard Ker, two ss *Freshspring* Trustees, resolved to save her and return her to her roots in North Devon.

She arrived back in Bideford on 4th June 2020 where she is to be restored to operational use in order to increase the awareness of the renowned local maritime heritage of North Devon.

Jane Hanna MacDonald III has been donated to the Appledore Maritime Heritage Trust. To help save this valuable heritage boat and find out more go to: <https://amhtrust.org>



Jane Hannah MacDonal III arriving in Bideford Station, when she was still on her delivery bogey. August 1910.



Jane Hannah MacDonal III arriving on Bideford Quay, 4th June 2020. © Ray Goldsmith

Malcolm Allen *part one*

I was asked by John Puddy to write down my career experiences which might be of interest to other *Freshspring* members and readers of the *Freshspring Magazine*. Well, here goes!

I was born in Newbury, Berkshire in July 1950, with two brothers and one sister, and educated at Park House Secondary Modern School. I joined the local Sea Cadet Unit, TS *Battleaxe*, along with my elder brother and enjoyed learning about the Royal Navy with opportunities to spend time on RN ships and training establishments. From a young age I had always enjoyed taking things apart and in the sea cadets was encouraged to join the RN as an Artificer as this was a great way to get a skill plus see the world.

An Artificer is an appointment held by a member of an armed forces service who is skilled at working on electronic, electrical, electro-mechanical and/or mechanical devices. The specific term "artificer" for this function is typical of the armed forces of countries that are or have been in the British Commonwealth and refers to a Senior Non-Commissioned Officer. Artificer is a job title and not a rank. Royal Navy Artificer is a highly skilled naval rating who has successfully undergone a five-year formal apprenticeship in skill of hand and specialist knowledge training in Her Majesty's ships and training establishments, a position superseded in 2010 by the introduction of Engineering Technicians (ETs), this possibly a decision later regretted by the RN.

After passing the Artificers' technical examination and the two day selection course at HMS *Victory* in Portsmouth, I joined the Royal Navy as an Artificer Apprentice on the 12th September 1966 at HMS *Fisgard* in Cornwall where I undertook the first year's basic training and selection of my specialisation. The selections were Engine Room Artificer, Shipwright, Electrical, and Air Frames & Air Electrical. At *Fisgard*, I played hockey, athletics, gymnastics and joined the brass band playing the bugle which was a way of getting out of normal apprentice guarding duties. However, this meant getting up early to play reveille to wake up the whole establishment, playing colours, carried out to raise the white ensign at the beginning of the day and sunset to lower the flag at the day's end.

The second part of training was engineering specialisation which for



At HMS *Fisgard*.

me took place at HMS *Caledonia*, Rosyth, joining in September 1967, as an Engine Room Artificer Apprentice, Fitter & Turner. Here the apprentices were taught RN marine engineering alongside the Shipwright apprentices. At *Caledonia*, I continued playing in the brass band but changing to a tenor horn which got me out of the early morning bugling duties. The band played at local town fetes at the weekends but also played at the Royal Tournament in Earls Court, London and beating the retreat at Edinburgh Castle with the joint forces massed bands. I also continued playing hockey, representing the ships first XI against local Scottish sides and other RN establishments.

To deliver the comprehensive mechanical training, there were two ships allocated specifically for the Artificer training. The first, HMS *Saintes*, was tied up alongside at Rosyth where all Artificers continued their practical training in the operation of marine steam systems and to pass the Auxiliary Watchkeeping Certificates for the operation of specific steam plant. The second ship, HMS *Rapid*, was used to complete the Caledonian sea training, sailing from Rosyth giving the Artificers their first experience of the operation of a steam-driven sea going ship. I passed out (graduated) in December 1969, a very proud moment, witnessed by my parents who travelled to Scotland for the passing out parade.

HMS *Saintes* (D84) was a 1942 Battle Class fleet Destroyer launched in 1944 powered by twin screws, steam boilers and steam turbines. *Saintes* finally paid-off at Devonport in May 1962. She was then towed to Rosyth to become a training ship for Artificer Apprentices at HMS *Caledonia*. Her armament was mothballed, but her machinery was kept in full working order by the apprentices. After ten years, she was finally broken up at Cairn Ryan in 1972, by which date she was the last of the Royal Navy's 1942 Battle Class Destroyers.

HMS *Rapid*, a Type 15 class frigate, F187; propulsion: steam turbine, date built: 1942, status: live, details tonnage: 1,710 disp (surf), dimensions: 109.1 x 11.5 x 4.4m, material: steel engine: 2 x geared steam turbines, 2 x Admiralty 3 drum water tube boilers, dual shaft, 2 screws armament: 1 x twin 4" gun Mark 19, 1 x twin 40mm Bofors Mk.5, 2



HMS *Saintes*.

x Squid A/S mortar or 2 x Limbo Mark 10 A/S mortar power: 40000 s.h.p. speed: 36 knots. Used as a target; other reasons: scuttled date lost: 13/09/1981; complement: 174. Used for training Artificers from 1966.

Following the successful completion of my Caledonian training, I was drafted in January 1970, along with other

apprentices, to HMS *Ark Royal* which was being refitted in dry dock at Plymouth. Initially billeted at HMS *Drake* barracks with the other apprentices, where we had to live in a prefab Nissan huts heated only by one solid fuel heater, we were pleased to get on board, once the refit was complete for better accommodation. We had 18 months to pass the RN Boiler Watchkeeping Certificate to progress and I was promoted to an Artificer Leading Hand during this period. The ship was operational all over Europe and the USA where *Ark Royal's* aircraft flew with our NATO partners. I was also able to witness the sea trials of the new marine Harrier Jump Jet taking place on *Ark's* flight deck, a very memorable moment! With the ship having four units (shafts) A, B, X & Y and the boilers burning 960 second oil, every 1,400 hours' steaming, each boiler had to be cleaned whether at sea or not. A very important but necessary task as you can see from the photograph of the cleaning team.

Ark Royal was launched in 1950, commissioned on 22nd February 1955. In this time, she underwent redesign, she had a 5.5° partially angled flight deck, two steam catapults capable of launching aircraft weighing up to 30,000 pounds (14,000kg), a deck-edge lift on the port side (the first British ship to be fitted with such a device), modified armament, and the new mirror landing system. These innovations allowed aircraft to land and take off from the carrier at the same time. Her flight deck as built was 800 by 112ft (244 by 34m). Initially on entry into service, the ship had a complement of up to 50 aircraft comprising Sea Hawks, Sea Venoms, Gannets, Skyraiders and various helicopters. As later aircraft types grew in size and complexity, her air group fell to below 40 when she left service in 1978.

From 1967 to February 1970, she underwent a refit costing around £30 million, which allowed her to comfortably operate the larger Phantom and Buccaneer Mk2 aircraft. Her modifications included a full 8.5° angled flight deck, new and far more powerful steam catapults, bridle-catchers, heavy-grade jet-blast deflectors and heavy-weight arrestor cables. Twelve hundred miles of new cabling was installed, but the ship was not completely rewired and retained old DC electrics. A modified island and a partially new electronic suite were also added,

though some of her original radars, such as 983 height finders, were retained and she did not receive the 3-D air search radar set that her sister had fitted, instead two double array 966 versions of the standard RN 965 long range system were fitted and one of the new 986 sets.



HMS Rapid.

Significantly, *Ark Royal* was the first and only RN carrier fitted with a USN carrier approach system, the AN-SPN 35 radar, increasing night aircraft operational capability and safety. Her flight deck size was increased port aft giving her extra deck-park space for her air group. She was also fitted for four Sea Cat missile launchers, for defensive armament which were operational in 1973. Significantly, there was little more than an overhaul of her steam turbines and boilers, meaning that mechanically she was very dated; however, the stripping out of *Eagle* meant that for a time essential spares were available. *Ark Royal* was then scheduled for at the most only five years' more service by a new government policy to scrap the carriers by 1975. Intensive maintenance, as well as a new programme of continuous servicing and repair, was able kept her going until late 1978, though increasing mechanical and electrical failures led to her decommissioning in early 1979.

On 9th November 1970 while in the Mediterranean to participate in a NATO exercise, she collided with *Bravyy*, a Soviet Navy Kotlin-class destroyer which was shadowing *Ark Royal* (a common practice during the Cold War). *Ark Royal* was slightly damaged, while the Soviet destroyer sustained minor damage and two missing crew. *Ark Royal's* commanding officer, Captain Ray Lygo, was cleared of blame at the subsequent court martial.



Part of the boiler cleaning team, can you see me?

The ship featured in the 1960s British television series 'Not Only... But Also' starring Peter Cook and Dudley Moore. When commissions ended, items were fired off the catapult into the sea, including pianos and once a toilet complete with paying-off pennant. In the mid-1970s, the ship made a return to television. A major BBC documentary series, 'Sailor'. was made, showing life on board the ship during a February to July 1976 Western Atlantic deployment. Her commanding officer at this time was Captain Wilfred Graham, a later Flag Officer Portsmouth and the ship's Commander (executive officer) was Commander David Cowling. The theme tune for the programme was "Sailing" by Rod Stewart – a song that came to be associated with the ship and her successor.

By 1970, *Ark Royal* had a complement of 39 aircraft. This typically comprised 12 Phantom FG Mk1s, of 892 Naval Air Squadron, 14 Buccaneer S Mk2s of 809 Squadron, 4 Gannet AEW (Airborne Early Warning) Mk3s of B Flight 849 Squadron, 6 Sea King HAS Mk1s of 824 Squadron, 2 Wessex HAR Mk1s of the Ship's Flight and one Gannet COD Mk4 later replaced by an AEW3 The Buccaneers doubled as tanker aircraft, using buddy refuelling pods, and as long-range reconnaissance aircraft with bomb bay-mounted camera packs. In July 1976, she represented Britain at the United States Bicentennial Celebration in Fort Lauderdale, Florida.

In 1972, the Buccaneers aboard *Ark Royal* took part in a long range strike mission over British Honduras in Central America shortly before its independence as a constitutional monarchy, named Her Majesty's Government of Belize, to deter a possible Guatemalan invasion, who had long standing territorial claims.

In 1977, under the flag of Admiral Sir Henry Leach KCB Commander-in-Chief Fleet, *Ark Royal* led the Royal Navy's tribute to and celebrations of Queen Elizabeth II's Silver Jubilee at Spithead.

She entered HMNB Devonport on 4th December 1978 and decommissioned on 14th February 1979. Like her sister *Eagle*, she had a relatively short (24 year) life, and when the White Ensign lowered for the last time, the Royal Navy no longer had fixed wing aircraft at sea, a situation that persisted until the commissioning of the Invincible-class light aircraft carriers, with their complements of Sea Harrier VTOL aircraft, in the early 1980s. On 29th March



Ark Royal in Fort Lauderdale, Florida.

1980, the Ministry of Defence (MOD) announced that she would be sold for scrap and so ended plans to preserve her. She left Devonport on 22nd September 1980 under tow to be scrapped at Cairnryan near Stranraer in Scotland, arriving on 28th September.

In August 1971, following successful completion of my steam boiler authorisation, I was drafted to HMS *Osprey* Fleet Maintenance Group in Portland, Dorset where the group carried out maintenance on RN and NATO ships arriving at Portland usually for the Royal Navy work ups. This is to test ships' efficiencies at fighting and damage control in times of conflict called war games. During this time I was promoted to a Petty Officer which was consolidated by my attendance at a six week senior rates leadership course at HMS *Royal Arthur* in Melksham, Wiltshire. This took me up to Christmas 1971.

In January 1972 I was drafted to HMS *Grenville* docked in Portsmouth where I was to continue my steam training within the engineering structure to manage the operation of the ship's engineering at sea and in harbour. The *Grenville* was a Type 15 frigate, 2,300 long tons (2,33 t) standard, length 385ft, Beam, 37ft 9in, draught 14ft 6in, propulsion - 2 x Admiralty 3-drum boilers, steam turbines on 2 shafts, 40,000shp speed 31 knots, complement 174, radar Type 293Q target indication (later Type 993), Type 277Q surface search, Type 974 navigation, Type 262 fire control on director CRBF, Type 1010 Cossor Mark 10 IFF, Type 174 search, Type 162 target classification, Type 170 attack, Armament 1 x twin 4 in gun Mark 19, 1 x twin 40mm Bofors Mk.5; 2 x Squid A/S mortar or; 2 x Limbo Mark 10 A/S mortar.

During the time on board I passed the RN Unit Watchkeeping Certificate and was promoted to a Chief Petty Officer. Following the completion of this sea training, I was draughted to Portsmouth Fleet Maintenance Group based in the dockyard, accommodated in the Chiefs' mess of HMS *Victory*. As a group we carried out essential maintenance and repairs to RN ships arriving in port. It was here that I extended my knowledge of fault finding and repairs to steam propulsion ships. I was fortunate to be trained in the gas turbine propulsion systems, namely Olympus & Tyne marine engines, as well as taking an Additional Qualification (RN ADQAL) in marine refrigeration & air conditioning. During this time I was part of a new team that carried out the first



HMS Grenville F197.

Olympus engine change on a type 42 Frigate alongside in the dockyard. This showed that a gas turbine engine could be changed in one day using a temporary bolted rail system called 'Hockey sticks'.

It was during this time that I met and married my wife Karen and enjoying life in Portsmouth, having bought my first house but it was

soon come to an end when I was drafted to HMS *Keppel* F85 in May 1976, just a few months married! I joined *Keppel* in Rosyth.

Keppel was laid down by Yarrow Shipbuilders at their Scotstoun shipyard on 27th March 1953, launched on 31st August 1954 and completed on 6th July 1956.

On commissioning, *Keppel* joined the Second Training Squadron, based at Portland Harbour. She paid off for an extended refit in March 1958, during which her hull was strengthened as a result of operating experience of ships of the class in heavy seas. In September 1960, *Keppel* returned to the Portland Training Squadron, and from June 1963 to April 1964 served with the Fishery Protection Squadron.

In February 1973, *Keppel* was reduced to reserve, joining the Standby Squadron at Chatham. She was listed for disposal when a boiler explosion on sister ship *Hardy*, serving with the 2nd Frigate Squadron at Portland, caused *Keppel* to return to active service to replace *Hardy* in July 1975. *Keppel* remained with the 2nd Frigate Squadron, serving in the training role, until November 1976. She was again placed on the disposal list in 1977 and was scrapped at Sittingbourne in 1979.

The Blackwood class displaced 1,180 long tons (1,200t) at standard load and 1,456 long tons (1,479t) at deep load. They had an overall length of 310ft (94.5m), a beam of 33ft (10.1m) and a draught of 15ft (4.6m). The ships were powered by one English Electric geared steam turbine that drove the single propeller shaft, using steam provided by two Babcock & Wilcox boilers. The turbine developed a total of 15,000 shaft horsepower (11,000kW) and gave a maximum speed of 27 knots (50km/h; 31mph). The Blackwoods had a range of 4,500 nautical miles (8,300km; 5,200mi) at 12 knots (22km/h; 14mph). Their complement was 140 officers and ratings. The ships were armed with three Bofors 40mm guns in single mounts. The mount on the quarterdeck was later removed as it was unusable in heavy seas. They were equipped with two triple-barrelled Limbo Mark 10 anti-submarine mortars. The Blackwood-class ships had the same sonar suite as the larger Whitby-class frigates where the Limbo mortars were controlled by three sonars, the Type 174 search set, Type 162 target-classification set and the Type 170 'pencil beam' targeting set to determine the bearing and depth of the target.

On the *Keppel* I was responsible for the outside machinery but still operating the steam system unit on shift. *Keppel* carried out its



HMS Keppel.

anti-submarine role within NATO and travelled mainly around the Mediterranean. However, early in 1977 following a hull inspection, the ship was found to be non-seaworthy. As she could no longer go to sea, the ship's company was transferred to Chatham Naval Base to board HMS *Hardy* which we took out of reserve, sailed back to Portsmouth where we continued *Keppel's* sea duties. In August 1977 she was placed into standby and all of the crew was drafted to other ships.

On commissioning, HMS *Hardy* served in the Third Training Squadron at Londonderry Port before transferring to the Second Training Squadron in Portland in 1957. In 1960 she underwent a major modernisation and refit, before joining the Twentieth Frigate Squadron in Londonderry Port. In 1967 *Hardy* transferred to

the Second Frigate Squadron and attended Portsmouth Navy Days. The after 40mm guns in these ships were removed early in their careers due to hull strengthening problems.

In January 1977, when the United Kingdom enlarged its Exclusive economic Zone to 200 nautical miles (370km), *Hardy* was deployed on patrols of the EEZ, protecting fishing stocks and oilfields. Serving mainly in the Londonderry Port and Portland areas, *Hardy* attended the 1977 Silver Jubilee Fleet Review off Spithead when she was part of the 2nd Frigate Squadron. At this time *Hardy* was the last Type 14 frigate in the reserve fleet but unlike other frigates in reserve



HMS Hardy.



HMS Kent.

at that time, was not refitted for the Falklands Relief Fleet, she being deemed of limited value by this time. She paid off to the Standby Squadron in August 1977, then, after another short spell of operational service at Portland, became a stores accommodation ship in Portsmouth in October 1979. She was used as a target for Exocet missiles and was finally sunk, by torpedo, in the Western Approaches 3rd July 1984.

So in September 1977, I was drafted to HMS *Kent*, a County Class Guided Missile Destroyer based in Portsmouth to complete my sea time. This was the most modern ship I had been drafted to gaining experience in the use of gas turbines to enable the ship to get to sea quickly. During the time on board I, with another Chief, came up with an improvement to remove the water distilling plant heating elements which had to be replaced frequently to be cleaned.

Kent was one of two County Class Destroyers ordered under the British Admiralty's 1956-57 shipbuilding programme. She was laid down at Harland & Wolff's Belfast shipyard on 1st March 1960 and launched by Princess Marina, Duchess of Kent on 27th September 1961. The ship was completed on 15th August 1963. *Kent* was 521ft 6ins (158.95m) long overall and 505ft (153.92m) between perpendiculars, with a beam of 54ft (16.46m) and a draught of 20ft 6ins (6.25m). Displacement was 6,200 long tons (6,300t) normal and 6,900 long tons (7,000t) deep load. The ship was propelled by a combination of steam turbines and gas turbines in a combined steam and gas (COSAG) arrangement, driving two propeller shafts. Each shaft could be driven by a single 15,000 shaft horsepower (11,000kW) steam turbine (fed with steam at 700 pounds per square inch (4,800kPa) and 950°F (510°C; 783K)) from Babcock & Wilcox boilers) and two Metrovick G6 gas turbines (each rated at 7,500 shaft horsepower (5,600kW)), with the gas turbines being used for high speeds and to allow a quick departure from ports without waiting for steam to be raised. Maximum speed was 30 knots (35mph; 56km/h) and the ship had a range of 3,500 nautical miles (4,000mi; 6,500km) at 28 knots (32mph; 52km/h).

A twin launcher for the Seaslug anti-aircraft missile was fitted aft. The Seaslug GWS1 was a beam riding missile which had an effective range of about 19mi; 31km. Up to 39 Seaslugs could be carried horizontally in a magazine that ran much of the length of the ship. Close-in anti-aircraft protection was provided by a pair of Seacat (missile) launchers, while two twin QF 4.5inch Mark V gun mounts were fitted forward. A helicopter deck and hangar allowed a single Westland Wessex helicopter to be operate.

A Type 965 long-range air-search radar and a Type 278 height-finding radar was fitted on the ship's mainmast, with a Type 992Q navigation radar and an array of ESM aerials were mounted on the ship's foremast. Type 901 fire control radar for the Seaslug missile was mounted aft Type 184 sonar was fitted.

Operational Service

After her commissioning and work-up, *Kent* spent the balance of her career as an escort to the Royal Navy's aircraft carrier fleet. She deployed at various times with *Victorious*, *Eagle*, and *Hermes* in the Atlantic, Indian, and Pacific Oceans. She was hard worked

throughout the 1960s, along with her batch-1 County sister ships, as they were the only guided missile-armed destroyers in the fleet until the latter half of the 1960s.

One role was as host ship for the Withdrawal from Empire negotiations in Gibraltar. She suffered a fire during refitting in 1976 but was soon repaired and was present for the Silver Jubilee fleet review of 1977.

In the late 1960s, all four of the batch-1 County-class vessels were planned to be upgraded with the superior Sea Slug Mk2 system, but the upgrades were cancelled in 1967-68 because the amount of time the ships would be out of the operational fleet while being refitted. *Hampshire* and *Devonshire* paid off early in 1976 and 1978 respectively. Some of the improvements in the second group of County destroyers, were fitted; *Kent* and *London* had their Seacat directors updated from GWS21 to GWS22, and the later model of 992 radar target indicator was on *Devonshire*, *Kent* and *London* by May 1974.

Kent was decommissioned in the summer of 1980, after only 17 years of active service and became the replacement for HMS *Fife* and Fleet Training Ship (FTS), moored to the lower end of Whale Island outboard of the defunct support ship HMS *Rame Head* opposite Fountain Lake, Portsmouth Naval Base. At the beginning of the Falklands War, she was surveyed for possible recommissioning (her large size, helicopter deck and four 4.5-inch guns would have made her a good command and shore bombardment ship), but her two years of unmaintained status meant a substantial amount of refit would be required to make her seaworthy, and no work was begun.

She spent 1982 through to 1984 as a live asset for artificer and mechanic training supporting HMS *Collingwood* and HMS *Sultan*, her machinery largely in serviceable condition. In 1984 she also became a harbour training ship for the Sea Cadet Corps. She was paid off from this in 1987 and became a training hulk at Portsmouth until stricken in 1993, though she lingered on, tied up to the same pier at Portsmouth Naval Base until 1996. *Kent* was sold for scrap, and in 1998 she was towed to India to be broken up.

In January 1979 I was drafted to HMS *Sultan*, the RN Technical Training College, in Gosport, Hampshire to teach Refrigeration & Air Conditioning. I was chosen for this position because I had passed the Refrigeration & Air Conditioning ADQUAL a few years earlier. Although I had not had any formal teacher training, I was sent to the RN Instructional Technique course where I was taught how to teach to Officers and Technician engineers. Teaching is one method of getting to know your subject – being asked questions you can't answer but then you research to provide the correct answer. If only I had the internet then! Ultimately the role was to teach and examine CPOs the Refrigeration & Air Conditioning ADQUAL which was a three week course ending in a three hour examination with a 60% pass mark. This period of time ended my contract with the RN, ending on 13th July 1980, 12 years from the age of 18. This was a difficult decision to leave the bosom of the Royal Navy but I was under the impression that the 'grass was greener on the other side', a decision that I was later to regret.

• *To be concluded next time as Malcolm moves into civvy street...*

Matt's Diary

Since my last diary entry whilst on board the laid up VLCC *Junin*, we received news from the company that we would be heading to dry dock for maintenance in Singapore. This would be my first experience of a dry dock so I had no idea what to expect.



VLCC Junin.

Initially we had to get to Singapore so we set sail from Malaysia and arrived after around three days of sailing. We then dropped anchor and waited outside Singapore for a few days until they were ready for us to enter. During this time we had visits from the superintendent of the ship who brought the dry dock specification with him. This consisted of all the jobs that had to be carried out by ourselves and the shipyard workers during dry dock. As a team, the 3rd Engineer, Chief Engineer and I then went around the engine room marking all of the machinery, pipes and other relevant areas that were due for maintenance in the dry dock specification.

Once the shipyard was ready for us, we began preparations for entering. During this stage of the operation, there was very little for the engineering department to do. The ship was manoeuvred into the dock by tug boats; we just had to keep the engine ready on standby. Once the ship was inside the dry dock, the gates were closed and the shipyard began draining the water from the dock.

One important thing that had to be considered when the dock was fully drained was the sea water cooling system for the machinery like the generators, air conditioning units and the compressors. Initially a connection set up from shore providing us with cooling water which needs to be maintained at 34°C. Unfortunately



Ship in dry dock before hull painting.



After painting plus scaffolding around the funnel.

the flow wasn't strong enough and the temperature began to increase. Once this temperature reaches a certain set point, it trips the generators and causes the ship to blackout. We tried numerous things to stop this without success. Eventually we decided it was best to receive power from shore so an electrical connection was set up to our switchboard. Once the water was all drained, the ship was then sitting on top of blocks preventing it from toppling over.

Whilst we were in the dry dock, the jobs that were carried out involved things that couldn't be performed whilst in the water. This involved replacing all the sea water overboard valves and repainting the hull, although there was still plenty of other jobs planned that did not rely on the ship being out of the water. The first day of dry dock was very hectic. We had a meeting before we arrived to discuss jobs, safety and work permits. However, when all the dry dock workers came on board, each individual person or group had to be shown to the machinery they would be working on. We also had to write work permits for our jobs and the jobs the dry dock workers were performing.

As the dry dock went on, this all became quite manageable. We decided to have a meeting each night after work as an engine room team and we would relay our plans for jobs on to the 2nd Engineer who would then prepare our work permits for the following day.

Once the jobs that needed to be completed out of the water were finished, the dock was refilled with water and tug boats dragged us to a wet dock a few rows down



Scaffolding around the engine room.



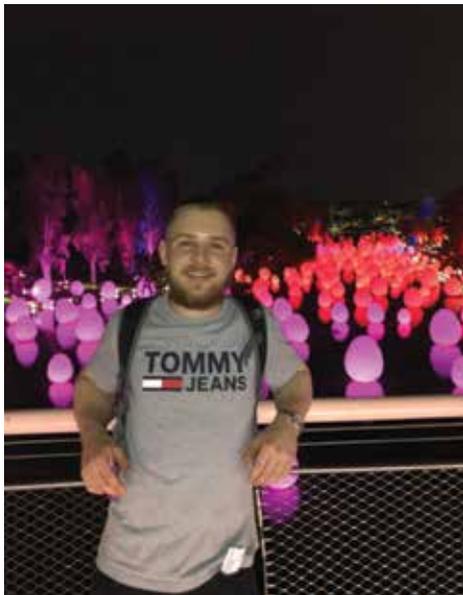
In the control room.

from the dry dock. This now allowed us to finish all of the jobs that didn't require us to be out of the water and also now we were able to use our own power from the generators as we now had sea water cooling.

The major jobs that were carried out that did not require the ship to be out of the water were main engine overhaul, generator overhauls and fitting of a ballast water treatment system. Some of my machinery as a 4th Engineer was inspected during dry dock. This included the sewage treatment plant, the overboard storm valves from the sewage treatment plant, the air bottles and the incinerator which was heavily damaged inside, so the refractory was all replaced.

Whilst in Singapore, we also managed to get some shore leave. Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, we were all temperature checked both on leaving and returning to the dock area. For the first time in a few months we all got haircuts and then visited Marina Bay and the gardens by the bay. I ended up signing off the ship on 13th March. There was still plenty of work to be done before the ship would have gone through sea trials and inspections.

About a week after I left, the vast majority of crew changes were cancelled due to the pandemic. I am now at home waiting to join a ship again. However, due to the current situation with Covid-19, there are still lots of crew change cancellations but hopefully this will improve going forward.



The gardens by the bay.



Returning to ship yard, Junin on the right.

Crossword Solution

1	V	O	L	U	N	T	E	E	R	S	6	P	U	M	8	P			
	I		E		I		X		E		T		U		I				
9	T	U	G		10	N	O	H	O	P	E	R		11	D	A	P		
	U		12	E	N	C		A		R		13	A	P	E		I		
14	P	U	N		O		15	U	N	O		M		16	R	U	N		
	E		17	D	A	M		S		B					C		G		
	R					P		18	T	R	A	M	19	P		20	U	N	A
	A		21	S		22	O	H	M		T		23	E	R	R		B	
24	T	A	C	H	O		A		E		R				25	R	I	O	
	E		R		26	P	O	N	T				I		E		A		
27	D	E	E	R					I		29	N	30	P	I	N	E	R	
			31	W	A	32	R		33	F	R	E	S	H		T		D	
34	35	P	I	S	T	E		O		H		E				36	O		
		R				A		L		R		37	R	E	E	F			
38	S	K	A			39	R	E	D	B	U	O	Y				40	T	U

Freshspring Steam Beer!

Continuing our successful relationship with Bideford's Clearwater Brewery, The Steamship Freshspring Trust is excited to announce a new recipe for our 'Freshspring Steam Beer'.

The new Freshspring Beer is 4.2% abv and is a golden hoppy beer with a distinct clean and crisp edge... very drinkable!

Freshspring Beer comes in 500ml bottles and is 'bottle conditioned' which means some of the natural ingredients are present in the beer. This gives a more intense flavour but the bottle needs to stand before drinking to allow it to settle and requires careful pouring.

The beer is available direct from the brewery at £2.50 per bottle including VAT and can be ordered through sales@clearwaterbrewery.co.uk or by phone on 01237 420 492.

Delivery for a minimum of 12 bottles can be made for free within a 10 mile radius. Deliveries further afield will be made by courier with a £15 charge.

Payment to be made in advance by BACS (call the brewery for bank details) or by cheque made payable to Clearwater Brewery Ltd.



Clearwater Brewery Ltd
Unit 1 Little Court
Manteo Way
Bideford
Devon
EX39 4FG



Leaving a legacy to the SS Freshspring Trust

The Steamship Freshspring Trust has benefitted greatly from the generosity of its members and friends who have left or given money to the Trust.

Legacies provide very necessary financial support in helping the Trust to meet its stated objectives of preserving the past and inspiring knowledge for the future

If you would like to think of giving the SS Freshspring Trust a legacy, it could not be easier: The following codicil can be completed by you, witnessed, and kept with your Will.

CODICIL

I (full name).....

of (full address).....

.....
declare this to be the (1st/2nd/other.....) codicil to my Will dated.....

I give, free of Inheritance Tax, the sum of

£..... (.....pounds)

to the SS Freshspring Trust of Little Cleave, Lower Cleave, Northam, Devon EX39 2RH (Registered Charity Number 1151907), absolutely for its general charitable purposes.

In all other respects I confirm my said Will.

Testator's signature:.....Date.....

Signed in the presence of:

First witness
Signature

Second Witness
Signature

.....
Full name

.....
Full name

.....
Address

.....
Address

.....
Occupation

.....
Occupation

Note: The witnesses must not be your executor, your executor's spouse or a beneficiary of your Will.

Freshspring's Sponsors

With grateful thanks to our Sponsors who enable us to achieve remarkable progress.



Alco Engineering (Manufacturing) Co.	Northam Town Council
Awards for All	OSD-IMT
Bideford Town Council	RT Marke
BMT Defence Services	Sky High Media
Boatsharefinder	Steam Heritage Publishing Ltd/ Vintage Spirit Magazine
Braddicks Leisure	Tesco plc
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Clearwater Brewery	The Bideford Bridge Trust
Daniel Adamson Preservation Society	The Charles Dunstone Charitable Trust
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