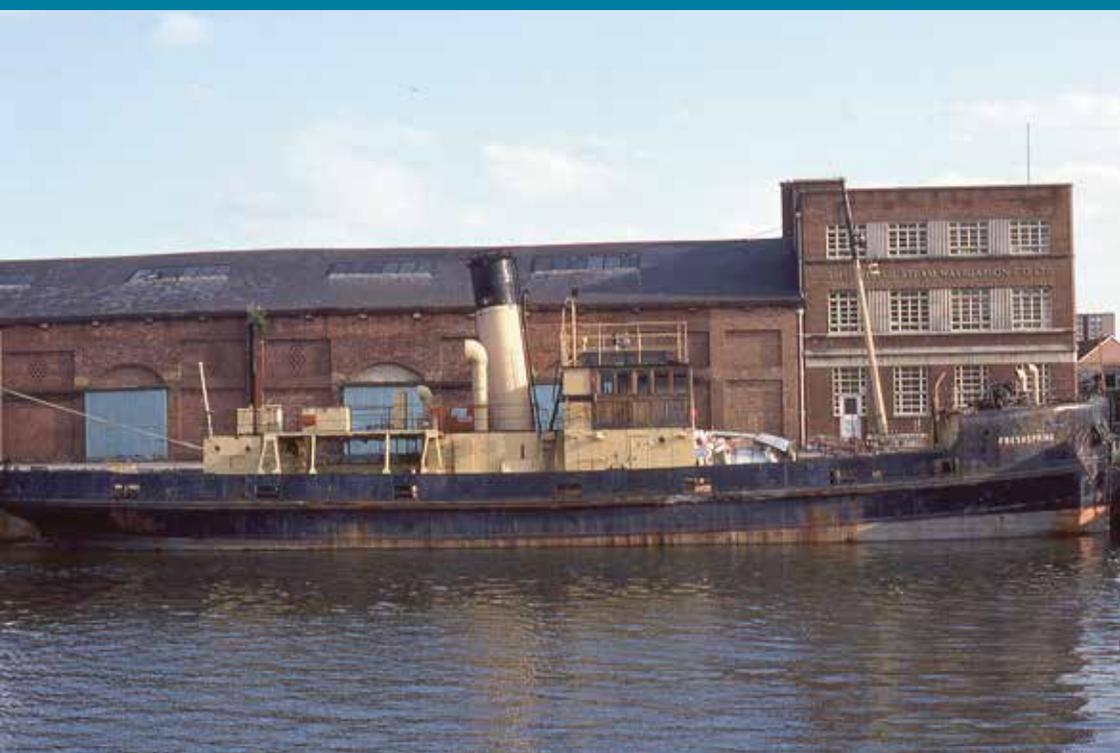


STEAMSHIP

FRESHSPRING

SOCIETY

FRESHSPRING NEWS



www.ssfreshspring.co.uk

No.7 Spring 2016

Preserving the past to inspire knowledge for the future

The Steamship Freshspring Society 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.

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

Website: www.ssfreshspring.co.uk

Facebook: www.facebook.com/SSFreshspringSociety?fref=ts

Membership Enquiries: Please send an s.a.e. for a form to: Steamship Freshspring Society, c/o Steam Heritage Publishing Ltd, Unit 1, Alfold Business Centre, Loxwood Road, Alfold, Cranleigh, Surrey, GU6 8HP, email: brian@steamheritage.co.uk; or you can join online.

Ship Visits & Volunteering on the ship: Visits to the ship at Newnham are possible by prior arrangement with John Austin, Tel: 07967 114 346, or email: john.austin@consultant.com. Enquiries about volunteering to help on the ship should also be directed to John Austin. Sorry, but casual visits to the ship are not possible.

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Freshspring News is edited by Brian Gooding, and published by the Steamship Freshspring Society, a registered charity.

Design & Production by Steam Heritage Publishing Ltd. Tel: 01403 588 360.

Editor's Ramblings. . . .

What a fantastic few weeks we've had, with the big dinner in Bideford, and the announcement that we now have the funds to move the ship from Newnham, patch up the hull, and move her to Bideford. This is the culmination of a huge amount of effort by Chairman John, Stephen and all the others who worked so hard to apply for the funds to save the ship. More later in here.



It was a real pleasure to meet so many friends and supporters at the AGM and the dinner. It is really helpful to be able to put faces to the names on the membership list!

I spent an extra day in Bideford that weekend and enjoyed a long walk along the old railway line towards Great Torrington, though I didn't get that far; well, not on foot but I did drive down to the old station there. It was a lovely walk and the old railway artefacts and lime kilns along the river certainly attracted my interest. In the afternoon, I spent a pleasant hour or so in Appledore, just enjoying the sunshine and being a tourist! The rest of the afternoon was spent at John and Wendy's home enjoying tea and a meal with them and Stephen, an enjoyable and convivial afternoon and evening, though we were all a bit tired after the dinner!

Looking around the country, there is quite a number of ship restoration projects, some more advanced than others. The Liverpool-based tug/tender *Daniel Adamson* had recently been recommissioned following a major HLF-funded restoration. A celebratory weekend was held which our Chairman attended, no doubt getting pointers on what to do when we achieve the same result with *Freshspring*. I was interested to catch a post on Facebook about the Clyde Turbine Steamer *Queen Mary* which spent many years moored on the Thames in London and as I write, is being towed from Tilbury back to the Clyde; another piece of maritime history has been saved, although, as far as I can gather she will be a static exhibit/museum but the charity's educational aims are very similar to ours.

A new 64 page book about the *Medway Queen's* time on the Isle of Wight as a nightclub has just been published. It is entitled '*The Medway Queen Club – 50th Anniversary 2016*'. If anyone is interested, let me know and I can point you in the right direction for a copy. I hope one day we can produce a book on the story of the *Freshspring* and her rescue and subsequent return to service. By then, we will really have arrived and achieved our goals.

Brian Gooding

FRONT COVER: Steamship Freshspring, outside the offices of the Bristol Steam Navigation Company Ltd in, we believe, 1980. (From a slide bought by Stephen on Ebay.)

Chairman's Letter

This past year has been an extremely active year for Trustees.

We have been working on a major bid to the Heritage Lottery Fund for several months. Although we had to change our plans as a result of being given notice at our current berth, the work done will be valuable as we move forward. As a result of the notice, we have had to review our plans and operate in an emergency mode to ensure that we are able to move the ship before our current tenancy expires. If we fail, we could be faced with the demolition of the ship. A major application was made to the National Heritage Memorial Fund, and I am pleased to report that this has been successful and we have been awarded £155,000 towards saving the ship and moving her to Bideford. In addition, a local Bideford company, Keynvor Morlift, has agreed to tow the ship to Bideford for £1, saving us £12,749. This means that with some funds from our own reserves, mostly raised by Members, the project to move the ship is fully funded. Victoria Symes, who we engaged to support fundraising, has been the key person in gaining this support along with a huge amount of work by Trustees.

Our work now is to make sure we keep up the momentum and deliver a valuable maritime heritage project in Bideford. To this end we have recruited a considerable number of Members in the area who are keen to volunteer.

We continue to move around the region, providing talks and attending events. This is an essential activity and keeps the Trust in the major maritime arena.

Behind all we do is our aim to achieve the ultimate goal, which is to see *Freshspring* steaming again with a safe and sustainable future.

Trustees are now working with contractors and dry dock facilities to ensure the operation runs smoothly and remains on budget. Fortunately we have a very experienced team.

On 23rd April, we held a Gala Dinner in Bideford. This is the most ambitious thing we have done, but was essential to raise the profile of the project and to engage the movers and shakers in the area. I am very pleased to report that the event was a sell out and hugely successful. Our speakers, Earl Attlee, Martyn Heighton, Director National Historic Ships, and TV presenter Tom Cunliffe captivated the audience and John Wakeham, a celebrity auctioneer, managed to sell all the auction lots making almost £2,000 towards the Bideford move. Many of you attended the dinner which was very pleasing while many of those who could not made donations instead. I was very pleased to see fourteen teachers attending which is very valuable in developing our school projects. We were also able to launch our first school project on the evening which is funded by The University of The West of England and very substantially supported by Whitelands Engineers of Bideford, who have carried out design and the manufacturing of the project. A simple steam engine which is part of the project was built by local member Mike Pavie as a gesture of support.

We have very exciting times ahead and with our growing membership and people

wishing to volunteer, I am sure the *Freshspring* project will gain huge momentum when the ship arrives in Bideford.

The AGM went very well and we have a new Trustee to support our future development. Maryann Soper is a well known and respected Industrial Archaeologist who brings a wide range of new skills to the board. She is also based in North Devon which is helpful in local development. It is likely that we will co-opt more Trustees during the year to both provide for succession planning and to continue to broaden our skills base, so if you are interested in helping to govern this project, please get in touch.

We arranged a trip from Bideford to see the ship at Newnham. This was well subscribed and we filled a minibus. We collected people from Bideford right through to Burnham on Sea. It is likely that we will do this again so that members can see the ship in dry dock. Any of you can come along to see the ship, just let us know. She will be in dock around mid-June and we will let you know nearer the time exactly where she is and how to get there. If you can paint, you are even more welcome to come along.

I must again thank our loyal Members for the support you give us in so many ways.

John Puddy

Education report

For our education report this time, I would like to focus on our Primary school project, the details of which are set out below.

Purpose: To inspire young people to gain a basic understanding of engineering to support Science Technology Engineering & Maths subjects.

The project is based on a mechanical air pump operated by either a rotating handle or a pump action (either can be chosen). The pump has transparent parts highlighting how a pump works and demonstrates rotating to reciprocal motion. The air compressed by the pump is fed to a manifold which has balloons attached. The operation of the pump inflates balloons providing a store of air. Clearly, the pressures involved are similar to a person blowing up a balloon, so are entirely safe.

The compressed air may be used via nozzles to operate a small wind turbine or other devices made by the school children. A base will be part of the unit with a steel pad for connecting projects magnetically. A basic list will be supplied.

In addition, there is a small air-operated engine which shows how a steam engine works. It is also transparent and so all of the operating principles can be seen.

The project is packed in a transportable box which is easily carried. The box will contain most material required for forming lesson plans. A school will receive five units so that a class can be divided into five groups. Only one engine is supplied as this will be the final exercise and children will progress to this according to ability.

The equipment is being manufactured by Whitelands Engineers of Bideford and

John Pavie. It will be complete in mid-May. Ideally we would like to work with one school to pilot this project and to build programmes based around Science Technology Engineering & Maths subjects.

In addition to this project, we are working with two companies and the University of The West of England to develop a marine simulator for use on the ship and in schools to promote maritime careers. I hope we can report more fully next time.

John Puddy

New Members – welcome

Andrew J Lincoln	<i>Bideford, Devon</i>
John Janssen	<i>Twickenham, Middlesex</i>
Stuart A Smith	<i>Gloucester</i>
Christopher Serna	<i>Bideford, Devon</i>
Brian R Cooper	<i>Saint Johns, Antigua</i>
Mike Pavie	<i>Bideford, Devon</i>
Paddy Frost	<i>Bude, Cornwall</i>
Colin Bell	<i>Bideford, Devon</i>
Michael Bowden	<i>Northam, Devon</i>
Mike Smith	<i>Bideford, Devon</i>
Ron Robins	<i>Appledore, Devon</i>
David Young	<i>Lympstone, Devon</i>
Maryann Soper	<i>Barnstaple, Devon</i>
Iain D Miles	<i>Taunton, Somerset</i>
Rebecca Edwards	<i>Bideford, Devon</i>
Valerie Deering	<i>Bideford, Devon</i>
Earl of Arran	<i>Barnstaple, Devon</i>
John Letton	<i>Bridgend, S Wales</i>
Alec McCartney	<i>Barnstaple, Devon</i>
Richard Ker	<i>Appledore, Devon</i>
Countess Teresa Attlee	<i>Waterlooville, Hampshire</i>
Simon Tattershall	<i>Bideford, Devon</i>
Russell Eastley	<i>Bideford, Devon</i>
John Rankine	<i>Appledore, Devon</i>
John & Cath Pavitt	<i>Torrington, Devon</i>
Michael Burgess	<i>Barnstaple, Devon</i>
Mike Roberts	<i>St Austell, Cornwall</i>
Mrs Solveig Whittle	<i>Appledore, Devon</i>
Roger Palmer	<i>Northam, Devon</i>
Jenny Cooper	<i>Whimple,, Devon</i>

Secretary's Notes

It has been a very busy and pivotal few months for the Trust with the run up to our AGM, the Gala Dinner and the pressing need to raise funds to move *Freshspring* from her current berth on the River Severn to Bideford. I was touched and encouraged by the capacity turnout at the Gala Dinner, it being great to see so many people out and in support of the project, something that I will have to remember as I push through the oh so necessary paperwork that accompanies a project such as *Freshspring*.

With the confirmation that we do have the funds to bring *Freshspring* to Bideford, our next steps are to make arrangements with the drydock to book her in and liaise with all of the various sub-contractors, such as water blasting specialists to clean the hull, ultrasonic thickness testing of the hull plates and painters, to name but a few, to ensure everyone comes in at the correct time so we can get *Freshspring* back out again and on her way to Bideford.

As soon as possible we will resume work on our full restoration bid to the Heritage Lottery Fund to return *Freshspring* to full steaming condition.

I am quite amazed by the power of our online presence through our website and social media. Our Chairman, John Puddy, has been to see Roger Inglis after he read about *Freshspring* on our website. Roger was the last Chief Engineer on *Freshspring*, working out of Greenock for one year; he was also the engineer who mothballed her. Even more amazing was that his father was Chief Engineer in 1958. There will be more about his experiences in a future newsletter.

Following a post on Facebook, I have recently made contact with another former crew member, who we will be meeting soon onboard *Freshspring*. So you can see that it is good to spread the word as you never know who might pop up.

Stephen Attenborough
stephen.attenborough@ssfreshspring.co.uk

Membership

This time we welcome around 30 new members, a real surge since the last newsletter. Again, many of these are from Bideford or close by, helping to build an excellent base of members – and hopefully volunteers – for when the ship moves to the town.

These are exciting times, as you will have seen elsewhere, which have contributed to the late publication of this newsletter. My apologies for this but we felt it was worth delaying publication until after the Gala Dinner.

Please continue to encourage your friends to join the Society and help to ensure the future of this unique vessel.

Brian Gooding

NHMF Grant Application Successful

Patron of the Steamship Freshspring Society, Earl Attlee, announced a successful outcome for the society's recent funding application to the National Heritage Memorial Foundation on Saturday night at a Gala Dinner fundraising event hosted at the Royal Hotel, Bideford.

He said: "What immediately struck me about this project was not just that I assessed it as technically viable and sustainable in operation. What really made the difference was the social and educational aspects of the project. That is the desire to inspire youngsters, of both sexes, to take up or consider a career in engineering or at sea."

The event was well attended with the venue being filled to capacity. An auction and raffle were also held which raised almost £2,000 for the cause.

An initial pump priming grant from Devon County Councillor Gaston Dezart kick started the funding effort late last year after a long term berth was granted for the ship by Bideford Harbour Committee whose members include Councillor Peter Christie who said: "It was great to see individuals from across the whole spectrum of North Devon life and organisations attend the event. It certainly promises well for the whole project."

President of Bideford Chamber of Commerce, Maria Bailey, has also been very supporting of the project: "Saturday 23rd April 2016 proved to be a very proud evening for Bideford, the Chamber of Commerce and the many supporters of the fantastic *Freshspring* project. With a packed fundraising event we could not believe the announcement of the £155,000 NHMF funding that will make this project happen. Both the evening and this announcement showed what Bideford people are made of and what can be achieved when we all put our minds to really making things happen. This project is the catalyst to the regeneration that the town needs, focussing in on education, skills development and tourism. I cannot put into words how brilliant this is for the area."

Chairman of the Steamship Freshspring Society, John Puddy, commented: "This is the culmination of the efforts of trustees, The Chamber of Commerce and the council, as well as our wonderful team of volunteers. The past months have been a very critical time for *ss Freshspring*. We received notice that our berth was no longer available at Newnham but we very quickly gained the support from Bideford to bring the ship here for the long term. Short notice funding is very difficult to achieve and so for a while, it was possible that we could lose the ship altogether.

"The National Heritage Memorial Fund is a last resort funder of valuable heritage and so we made an application to them to save the ship. I am very pleased to report that our application has been successful and we have been awarded a grant of £155,000 toward saving the ship and bringing her to Bideford.

In addition, Keynvor Morlift, A local company has agreed to tow the *ss Freshspring* to Bideford for £1. I am therefore pleased to report that the project is fully funded and the *ss Freshspring* is saved and will be coming to Bideford."

Annual General Meeting Minutes (draft)

Date: Saturday 23rd April 2016 **Start time:** 2pm

Location: The Royal Hotel, Barnstaple St, Bideford, Devon, EX39 4AE

Attendance: 39 members of the society, with one observer.

Apologies: John D Tucker, Martyn Ashworth, Alan Freebury, John Coulter, Colin Hatch, Iain Miles

1. Welcome and apologies. The chairman (John Puddy) welcomed the gathered members and observer and received apologies (see above).

2. Some words from our patron

Earl John Attlee welcomed the gathered members and observers. He explained how it has been two years since he became involved with *Freshspring* and is pleased with the progress made and planned future works. He stated how he was glad to be involved from the start of the project and remains committed to it.

3. Minutes of 2015 AGM

The chairman presented the AGM minutes from 2015, which were accepted by the assembled members with no exceptions. Proposed by John Puddy and seconded by Robert Friendship.

4. Chairman's report

The chairman explained how the Trust has transformed with the challenges it has faced. Late last year we received notice on our current berth on the River Severn, so we have had to review our situation. We have received support from Torridge Council and are fitting in with their plan for the town of Bideford and in the process we are gaining much local support.

Graham Mimms has been active in working with the University of the West of England for support financially for our educational box project. This provides a stepping stone for the trust to develop its work in education and can lead to future projects with the university. John Austin has also been taking an active role in this area, helping in our work university students to provide them with real problem solving activities.

Graham Mimms is working with two companies and the London Nautical School to produce a ship simulator that can be taken into schools or used upon the ship.

John Puddy continued by reiterating that it remains the aim of the Trust to see *Freshspring* back in steam again and that the Trust is working on sustainability that will facilitate the funds to restore and operate *Freshspring*. He raised the need to maintain vibrant people and Trustees to move the project forward.

The chairman reported that Victoria Symes of Impact Fundraising has been engaged professionally to help us through our current difficulties and has put together bids to the National Heritage Memorial Fund (NHMF) and other funding sources to raise around £200,000 to save the ship by moving her to Bideford and raising her profile with funders.

On the subject of fundraising, a major Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) bid was in process, but had to be stopped when the current crisis (loss of berth on the Severn) came up.

There is an increasing membership from those local to Bideford, indicating local support, shown in part by the fact the dinner in the evening was a sell out.

The Trust continues to attend events and give talks, which in turn brings in more members and Brian Gooding continues to produce high quality material in everything we send out.

5. Forward plan and general activity updates

The chair reported that the Trust plans to bring *Freshspring* to Bideford in 2016, the tow for which has been gained for the nominal cost of £1, but has a value of over £12,000. Once in Bideford, the ship will take a static role, opening to the public to promote maritime heritage, while working with WINGS (a local charity) as we make approaches to HLF for the £3m bid for the complete restoration and returning to steam. This static period will allow the Trust to deliver locally and help determine what we want to do nationally. Torridge has assured us a prime location for *Freshspring* in Bideford and we will be linking with the Appledore Maritime Museum, Burton Arts Gallery and other attractions to form a visitor route, promoting each others organisation.

The chair urged attendees to have a look at the schools box project, supported by UWE and local engineering firm, Whitelands.

He continued by appealing for volunteers to help with a range of tasks, not just those on the ship, to keep the project rolling with the momentum already gained and that even one hour a week would be appreciated. There is increasing support from the Bideford town centre partnership and Chamber of Commerce, who can see the value of heritage.

In response to a question from our patron regarding the plans for the missing wheelhouse, the chair stated that the Trust had received a quote of £25,000 to replace it, but it could not be covered by the emergency funding we are applying for at present. However, to show the town that the ship belonged to them, the Trust would be looking to use local firms to produce it and enable locals see the ship develop.

Kevin Slater questioned whether the ship would need a 'fitness to tow survey' before being towed to Bideford and the chair was able to report that the Trust has received grants towards surveying carried out by John Timms of Graham & Woolnough for estimates on proposed works required and whether *Freshspring* can be towed to a nearby drydock. This survey has been able to assure our insurance company that she is safe to get to the drydock, but she must go to the drydock before the tow to Bideford due to passage outside of categorised waters. Our Funders have required quotes from all accessible drydocks, in our case these are Sharpness and Gloucester, from where she will be able to gain a Load Line

Exemption for the tow down to Bideford, as required by the Maritime & Coastguard Agency. The works in drydock will be temporary plating to save the ship and allow her to be towed to Bideford, but it will buy us time (at least five years) to apply for the full restoration cost.

Pressure remains on the Trust as we can not simply put her in a shed, away from the elements, so the team is determined to keep pushing forward to see the ship saved and steaming again.

6. Financial report and acceptance of accounts

The treasurer, Wendy Lo-Vel, reported that donations had increased significantly due to generous members, the majority of whom include a donation when paying their subscriptions. The added benefit of Gift Aid further boosts their donations.

The professional fundraiser is being used to secure funds for the essential works to bring *Freshspring* to Bideford, who in turn is being paid for by one donation that was originally to be used for the tow down, but was happy for his donation to be used for this instead.

Travel expenses and PR costs have increased from last year, but is as expected as the Trust becomes more active and attends more shows.

Local accountancy firm, RT Marke & Co. Ltd has recently offered assistance with our accounts and VAT, which will be welcome as the project develops.

7. Ship report

John Austin reported that *Freshspring* has been displaced from her quiet spot in the pill by Fred's lightship and is now back in the river alongside the quay and that volunteers have been on board most weekends and some weekdays in addition to the usual Tuesday.

Once back in the river, we realised that the ship had a list to starboard and found three or four feet of water in that fuel bunker. Pumping out revealed that corrosion had opened up leaks along the same plate joint that had caused problems in the boiler room the previous year. As a temporary fix we have a flexible pad clamped down over the perforations.

We do have a potential problem in the main stores where one of the bottom plates is beginning to weep midway between frames. If this gets any worse, we will seal it with a cement box.

The cable locker is pretty well ready to reinstate perforated plates but our Naval Architect feels we could leave this until after docking.

We have carried out superficial patching in the Forward Ballast – mainly at waterline.

We have done a bit more work on the boiler and dropped out the centre furnace front and burner, where we feel the worst corrosion might be, to help assess conditions. Initial boiler inspections are encouraging.

We have stripped and repainted the outer bulwarks and are part way through repainting the galley. We aim to have all accessible exterior areas repainted before

the ship leaves Newnham.

All the time there has been background maintenance and upkeep, generally by John Richards on Tuesdays.

Immediate plans are to continue tidying up the ship and get ready for the tow to Sharpness, though we will have to consider security. Last week John Timms, our Naval Architect, surveyed the ship and we will carry out his instructions ASAP.

John Austin advised that we should make the most of our situation by the Quay to remove and put to store the spares and loose equipment from *Freshspring*, and any parts which we remove in preparation for repairs or renovation. He proposed that we buy a secure shipping container for this.

John once again made an appeal for more volunteers.

8. PR, Membership and publications report

Brian Gooding related how one of our members, Colin Hatch, a tame boilermaker, has raised £85 for *Freshspring* from donations and urged all members to use their network of friends and colleagues to help the project. With Brian's son, a corporate image has been produced, that is used on all promotional material and branding to produce a strong image.

Membership is up to number 125, with currently 115 members, showing a good renewal rate. As ever, more members are required and he appealed for members to use word-of-mouth to increase the numbers.

Brian made an appeal for more articles for the newsletter; they do not have to be about *Freshspring*, as a greater diversity will make it even better.

9. Election of Chairperson and Trustees

John Puddy was proposed by Kevin Slater to continue as chairman, seconded by Graham Mimms. A show of hands by attending members (39) gave unanimous approval and there were also 17 postal votes in favour.

Voting for the reappointment of Stephen Attenborough for a further term of three years took place with 16 postal votes, 3 proxy votes and 39 from assembled members. He was duly appointed for a further term of three years.

Voting for the reappointment of John Austin for a further term of three years took place with 16 postal votes, 3 proxy votes and 39 from assembled members. He was duly appointed for a further term of three years.

Voting for the reappointment of Mark Rozelaar for a further term of three years took place with 16 postal votes, 3 proxy votes and 39 from assembled members. He was duly appointed for a term of three years.

A proposal for Maryann Soper to become a trustee was made by Rebecca Edwards, seconded by Robert Friendship, 2 proxy votes and 34 from assembled members. She was duly appointed for a term of three years.

10. Changes to constitution and vote

Stephen Attenborough explained that the Trustees wished to increase the possible

number of Trustees to 12 to aid succession planning, so that for a period of time between AGMs, Trustees could gradually hand over responsibilities to a new trustee. It is not the aim to have 12 Trustees for any length of time, though.

The resolution to amend the constitution was passed by the assembled 39 members and three proxy votes.

11. Any points raised by Members in question and answer session

John Cooper has found an auxiliary boiler that could be used onboard *Freshspring* to drive some ancillary engines. He is to work with John Austin on this.

Capt. D Gannicliff raised a vote of thanks to the volunteers who have done so much work so far.

12 Summing up with action plan and how members can help

John Puddy summed up the meeting and encouraged member to get involved, be it on board or at a distance with publicity and promotion of the cause and to help gain new members.

Gala Dinner

As the Chairman mentioned in his report, the Gala Dinner, which followed the Annual General Meeting, on Saturday 23rd April was held at the Royal Hotel in Bideford, just at the eastern end of the town bridge and in the shadow of the old railway station.

On the next couple of pages are a few pictures from the day, including the dinner which was attended by around 120 people.



Some of the members attending the AGM.



The Royal Hotel in Bideford where the AGM and Gala Dinner were held.

The Bideford Sea Cadets welcomed guests which included their President, Captain D Gannicliff, also a Steamship Freshspring Society member, and a friend.



The launch of the schools' Box project was held just before the dinner started.



LEFT: Keynote speaker was TV personality and sailor Tom Cunliffe.



The model of the ss Freshspring, the hooter, the ship's bell and a model boiler were on display at the dinner, as well as one of the auction lots, a painting of the Kathleen & May.



Auctioneer John Wakeham pauses to plan his strategy for the next lot.



Chairman John Puddy and Patron Earl Attlee are very pleased with the successful outcome of the NHMF application which was announced at the dinner.

Rededication of Daniel Adamson

John Puddy

I was fortunate to be invited to the rededication of the 1904 tug Tender, *Daniel Adamson*, at an event held in the dock outside the Maritime Museum in Liverpool in early May.

The rededication started with coffee and general networking and then an award ceremony for Trustees and volunteers. At the presentation, there were dignitaries from Liverpool and the Lord Lieutenant. I was very impressed by the trouble which was taken to compliment the support of members and volunteers and the numbers attending were very significant. All volunteers were given a pen made from wood salvaged from the ship's old bridge, an excellent and valuable gesture, which was very well received.

Trustees and VIP guests then moved to the ship for cocoa on board and for us visitors a very interesting tour of the ship, which was in steam. The work carried out by Cammell Laird is very impressive, particularly the reinstatement of the Art Deco panelling in the passenger saloon. The old ship looked better than she has for very many years. A great deal of work has been done to the engines and services, in some cases utilising modern technology.



The Daniel Adamson welcomes visitors on the recommissioning day.

A diesel generator is fitted to provide adequate and reliable mains power. The unit is silent and totally unobtrusive being sited in the aft tank space. This equipment allowed for modern equipment including a mains-powered boiler feed pump. In our modern world, it is important to both recognise heritage and the value of modern conveniences, which enhance safety and performance.

We then witnessed the rededication of the ship with a blessing and a bottle of Danny beer being smashed on the bow of the ship, clearly an emotional and significant moment in the history of this amazing vessel. The ceremony was topped off with the



Part of the Art Deco style interior.

first blowing of the ship's whistle, bringing the whole ceremony to life.

At 1.00pm, we went ashore for lunch which again was an excellent opportunity to meet and chat to the many people who were there from the maritime heritage sector. After lunch, we had speakers, one of whom was from the Lottery. It is clear that Lottery is becoming much more focussed on funds being used as investment so they do look at long term sustainability in all projects.



John Puddy on the bridge of the Daniel Adamson.

A major interest was that the weekend was designated as a steam weekend and there were several rollers and engines on site, all in steam for the occasion.

The *Daniel Adamson* will be back in service during July, running over her old routes along the Manchester Ship Canal, carrying passengers once more. I very much look forward to experiencing a trip on this remarkable survivor.

How did we get here?

Stephen Attenborough

Many of you know that *Freshspring* spent her first years working around Malta before coming back to the UK in 1967, then eventually being mothballed at Gareloch and finally sold into preservation in 1979. As part of creating a 'Conservation Statement' for *Freshspring*, I have been trying to fill in some of the gaps.

The order for 'the construction of one 200 ton Fresh Water Carrier' (*Freshspring*) was made by the Admiralty in November 1944. However, it would be a further ten months before the keel was laid down, with the launch taking place eleven months later, in August 1946, and the sea trials taking place in February 1947. It was during these sea trials in the Ribble Estuary, near Preston, that she "grounded on the Sandy Bank due to the fact that a pin in the reversing handle had become loose, probably through vibration, and dropped out. This was not discovered until the telegraph had been put to full astern and it was found that the vessel did not respond. The engines were immediately stopped, but the weigh on the vessel carried her on to the bank, and with the tide ebbing, it was not possible for her to get off." She was floated off on the next tide, but it must have been quite an embarrassing episode.

To add insult to injury, the following day, while entering Fleetwood wet dock, she had to avoid other vessels using the dock, resulting in her fouling the dockside, damaging the hull plating and pulling rivets in the process. This was all subsequently repaired in the following five days before she was handed over.



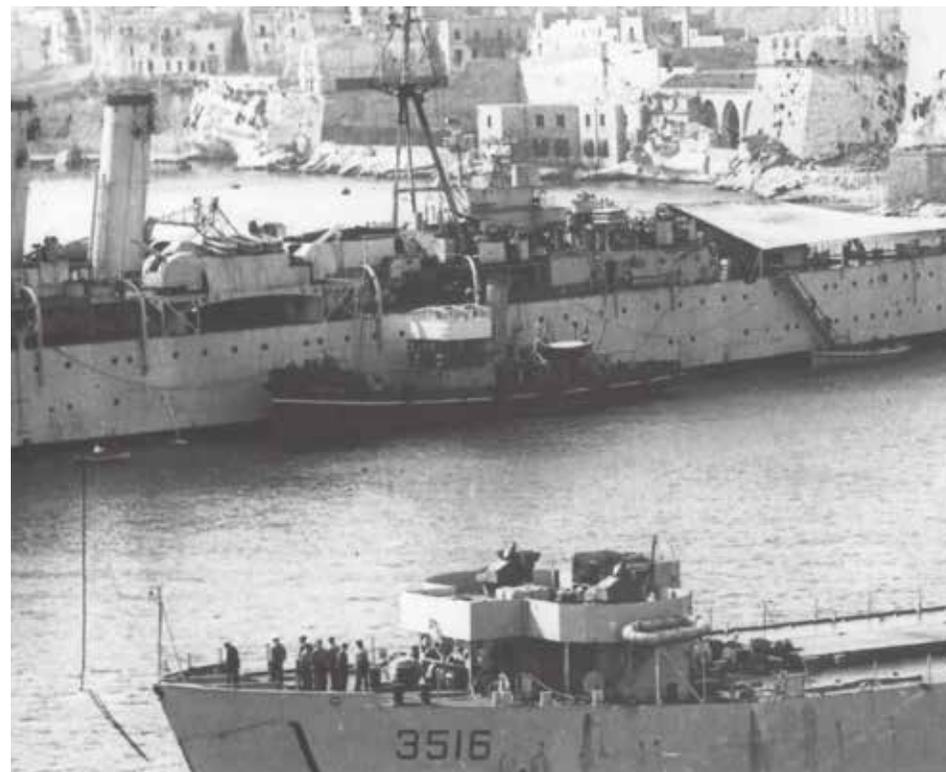
A moody picture of the *Freshspring*. Courtesy Imperial War Museum.

Freshspring then made her way over to Malta, where we know she worked until being put in reserve there in 1965. She was converted from hand coal fired to oil fired in 1956. Unfortunately we do not know much of her time out in Malta, but we do have some photos taken by Michael Cassar.

We know from the archives held at The National Maritime Museum at Greenwich that *Freshspring* was brought back to the UK under tow from 'Buster' to replace a sister ship, *Freshpond*, at Devonport in August 1967, though only two months later she was placed in reserve at Clyde. From this date we are a little less sure how often *Freshspring* was used, with contradictory reports, some saying she was mainly in reserve and others stating that she worked at various locations around the UK. However, we do know that regular dockings continued to take place, with *Freshspring* being inspected at Pembroke Dock, PAS Clyde, Portsmouth and possibly Charles Hill's yard in Bristol in 1974, near to where she would find herself six years later in private hands.

If you have any information on the life of *Freshspring* or would like to help in this research, please contact us using the website, www.ssfreshspring.co.uk or the details shown in this newsletter.

Next time, the preservation years.



Sister ship, *Freshspray*, in Malta.

Victorian Pier Review

Maryann Soper

Is it me, or does there seem to be a resurgence in the number of piers being restored or campaigned for lately? This is surely good news for maritime in general. After all, piers were built initially for landing large vessels alongside, enabling access to a stretch of coast they wouldn't have been able to otherwise.

The major success in this sphere has to be Hasting's Pier – aka The People's Pier. This opened in 1872 by the design of Eugenius Birch and the pier's landing stage enabled ferries to ship passengers to nearby piers on the South East coast and, on a few occasions, to Boulogne in northern France. Never just a facility, the community embraced the social aspect of the pier and it is perhaps that which is most missed today. Thankfully the longing nostalgia fuelled a long and inspired campaign to raise the funds to see it restored. It has very recently re-opened proudly as an unique pier for the 21st century.

But what about the less fortunate campaigns – those still in the pipeline? The fight is still on to save Colwyn Bay's Victoria Pier, Birnbeck Pier and the pier at Bognor, to name but a few.

Bognor Regis' first pier was built in 1864. It was a rather small pier generating revenue, selling a promenade at 1d per person. It wasn't until 1901, though, that a landing stage was added. This allowed paddle steamers to tie up at the pier, but was



Hastings Pier in its heyday with a paddle steamer alongside.



Eastbourne Pier is busy with a paddle steamer arrival.

short lived and in 1906 it became redundant. Ships grew too large for the structure. The campaign soldiers on; after all, what is Bognor without a pier?

Birnbeck Pier in Weston-Super-Mare, was another of Eugenius Birch's, but this one was earlier than Hasting's – built in 1867. As well as being a Victorian theme park, it was a major transportation link, with scheduled steamship services arriving from and departing to destinations including Cardiff, Minehead, Ilfracombe and Lundy Island. The last of these sailings, by the MV *Balmoral*, took place in 1979.

The Pier at Colwyn Bay was late on the scene in 1900. Incredibly, the pavilion boasted a large balcony which extended around three sides of the auditorium, and a full orchestra pit (much less emphasis on the landing stage already). Such was the social scene, that only three years after opening, the Pier Company extended the neck to a length of 750ft to facilitate outdoor theatrical performances! The pier was so crowded that the council introduced a two penny toll to prevent 'indiscriminate lounging on the pier'.

And with the next phase of the *ss Freshspring* at Bideford, we mustn't overlook the valiant efforts of those behind the pier at Westward Ho! The vision was to be able to welcome the paddle steamers to the Victorian seaside town and put it firmly on the tourist trail. It was a good idea, but the execution was a nightmare for the engineers. The Northam Burrows & Landing Pier Co. was established in the summer of 1864 (some sources say 1865) to raise the funds, but it took until 1871 to be built. Nothing could have predicted the series of unfortunate events that ensued and within a year it was ripped away by the ferocity of the sea. The determined rebuild gave it another 15 years or so, but you only need to look out over the balcony of the aptly named Pier House, to notice that it is missing. So we won't be boarding the *Freshspring* from there, but it doesn't prevent us from celebrating her return from there!



The sad remains of the pier at Westward Ho!

So what is it we enjoy so much about teetering over the water? Is it the fresh air? The enormous view? The sound of the sea or simply the relief of escaping from the land? Whatever it is, it just shows that a surprising amount of landlubbers also share the need to be on the sea.

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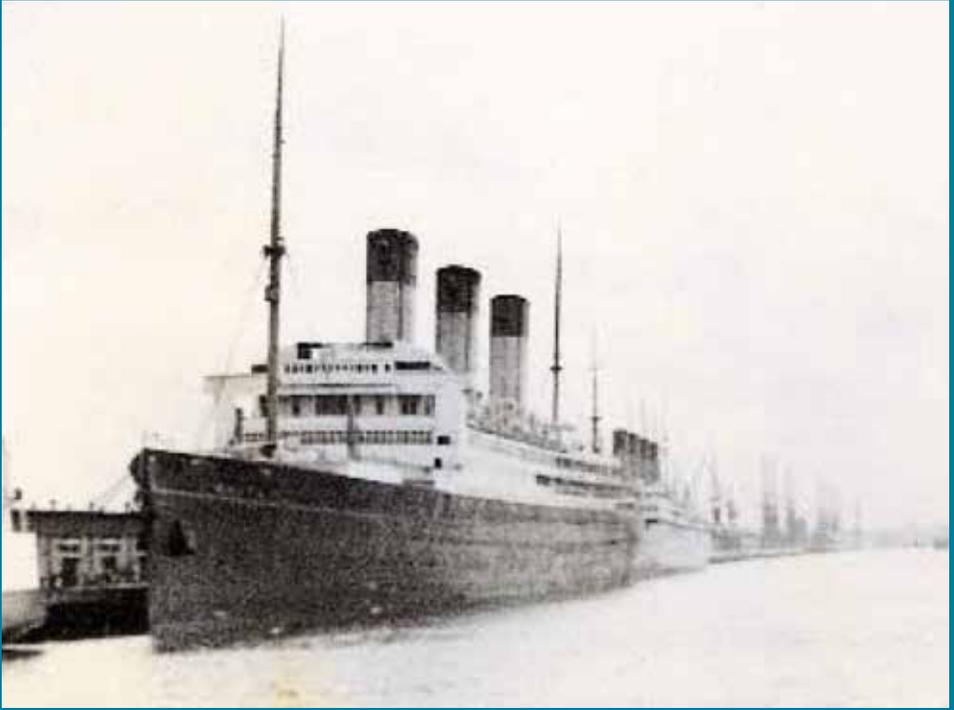
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ABOVE: In late March 1936, the RMS Majestic was laid up in Southampton following her last voyage from New York. She was sold for scrap soon after. Behind is the four funnel Windsor Castle, converted to two funnels in 1937 but sunk in the Med. in May 1943.

BELOW: The RMS Queen Mary during fitting out at John Brown's Clydebank shipyard in August 1935. She entered service with Cunard White Star on 24th March 1936.
Graham Gooding; Brian Gooding collection.

