

TSCC



Thames Scout Cruising Club Newsletter No.120

November 2022

Chairman's Log



What a summer and autumn it has been for our club. Since the last newsletter our members have enjoyed no less than seven events starting on 12th June with the 100th Anniversary celebrating 70 Years of our Queen's reign and, on a more humble note, 30 years of TSCC. I always look forward to parties at Little Compton and the buffet lunch with a celebratory cake together with the very attractive table decorations and of course the good company was definitely up to all expectations.

This was followed little more than two weeks later on 30th June by a visit to the New Wimbledon Theatre to see *Singing in the Rain* and lunch beforehand in the Wibbas Downe Inn, a JD Wetherspoon pub, situated conveniently opposite the theatre. I was a little concerned when a coach load of people disembarked and headed straight for the pub just before we got there but I need not have worried as there was plenty of room inside and the food and drinks were, as usual, very good value for money.

Six boats and their crews took part in the Thames Cruise from 9th to 13th July which kicked off at Boveney Lock with an evening buffet, each boat crew providing a share of the feast. Next day we voyaged on upstream to Cookham Lock where we were joined by a shore party of members for a barbeque. Then on to Hurley Lock Island where we moored for two nights for dinner at The Olde Bell where the food and ambiance were excellent. Next day we had the customary fun and games on the island followed by a delicious tea prepared by the boaters. Finally, we voyaged on to Sonning where we finished the cruise with a dinner and show, *Barefoot in the Park*, at the Sonning Mill where we were joined by yet more members. I had forgotten how small the stage is at the Mill and some of us had seats in the front row so that we almost felt like we were part of the show. Anyway, this was a very satisfactory way to finish the cruise.

September saw us boating again when six boats and 23 crew took part in the cruise on the Canal du Midi in Southern France from 23rd to 30th. The cruise was meticulously planned by Mark and Jackie including the air flights, the boat hire from Le Boat company, guided tour at The Cité at Carcassonne, two dinners and a barbeque. The boating was quite an experience with 18 locks on the first day, some of them triple locks, and some very tight bridge arches. The canal dates back to the mid-17th century and was designed by Pierre-Paul Riquet with the aim of transporting wheat, wine and textiles so that the original bridges were designed for barges and not for Le Boat style launches with flying bridges. It was a very tight squeeze at times steering and ducking under those arches! The general consensus was that, although we all enjoyed the experience and the company, the actual boating was rather hard work and would probably not be repeated by our ageing membership.

On 10th October an additional event organised by Mark was squeezed into the programme, a trip on MV Havengore, originally commissioned by the PLA as a survey vessel and built by Tough Bros. of Teddington. The Havengore was made famous on 30 January 1965 when it carried Sir Winston Churchill on his last journey by water from Tower Pier to Festival Pier during his State Funeral. TSCC members and friends voyaged from St Katherine Docks up to Westminster Bridge then down to the Barrier and back to St Katherine Docks. As we locked out of the dock, we saw the bascules of Tower Bridge raised to allow the passage of the steam tug Challenge (with tall mast). Our thanks to Chris Ryland, the owner, for making this historical boat available to us.

Two days later saw 18 of us on a conducted tour of Middle Temple, one of the four Inns of Court exclusively entitled to call their members to the English Bar as barristers. After the tour we lunched in the Elizabethan Hall, steeped in history, with its hammer beam roof trusses, oak panelling with wooden crest shields and stained-glass windows and then we were free to investigate other parts of the complex.

Then on 26th October we had the Race Night at Ajax WAC at which we cheered our horses on and enjoyed a fish or chicken and chips supper followed by fruit crumbles, coffee and mints. It was nice to give the excellent horse racing set that was so meticulously designed and made by past member "Buster" Bunce an airing again.

After all of the above we still have the Canterbury Pre-Christmas Getaway and the Annual Dinner at Leatherhead to come before we start our 2023 programme of events.

My heartfelt thanks to our committee members who have worked very hard to plan and organise all these events and my thanks on behalf of the committee to all you enthusiastic members for your support by coming along and enjoying them.

Finally, being mindful of one of our raisons d'être we have given further financial support to 1st Stanwell Scout Group and to Ben Twine, a Worthing Sea Scout to help him with raising funds to take part in the World Scout Jamboree in South Korea.

George

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TSCC is affiliated to the ATYC and the River Thames Society.

Cover Photo:

Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II was the Scouts Patron. Sadly, she passed away on the 8th September 2022 in the year of her Platinum Jubilee.

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100th Anniversary Celebration

(TSCC 30th plus QE2 70th)

Fifty-three members attended the celebration lunch at Little Compton. The weather was kind and it was a splendid afternoon with a wonderful lunch enjoyed in the suitably festooned garden of Mark and Jackie. In the last 30 years the Club has had eleven Chairmen who, with their Committees, have provided Club Members with a great variety of events and we will all have our own special memories from those events. Thirty-three members of the Club have served on the Committee at one time or another. The Club has always enjoyed a great feeling of friendship and camaraderie. One of the Club's main objectives is to raise money for Scouts and Guides and it has done so with considerable success; many groups and individuals have enjoyed a TSCC Grant which now total over £10,000. Our thanks to Mark and Jackie for hosting this event and special thanks to Jackie for preparing the food including the fabulous Jubilee Pudding (next page, presented by Sally) and Anniversary Cake (above).



Peter





THAMES CRUISE

9th-13th July 2022



The BBQ at Cookham, very ably cooked by Colin "chef" Wilford with some great dishes prepared by Jackie with help from Daphne.





Hurley Fun and Games



George organised some fun games and Jackie, Janet and Daphne prepared a fantastic cream tea – who needs the Ritz?!





The Canal Du Midi

23 September 2022

The Canal du Midi is a 150 mi long canal in Southern France; the canal is considered one of the greatest construction works of the 17th century.

The canal connects the Garonne to the Étang de Thau on the Mediterranean and, along with the 120 mi long Canal de Garonne, forms the Canal des Deux Mers, joining the Atlantic to the Mediterranean.

Construction lasted from 1666 to 1681, during the reign of Louis XIV. The Canal du Midi is one of the oldest canals of Europe still in operation; it was inscribed as a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 1996, because of its outstanding engineering and artistic design.



The TSCC cruise started at Castelnaudary 23m below the highest point of the canal and ended at Homps, a descent of 124m or 407 ft (and didn't we know it!).

Jo's Diary of the TSCC Canal du Midi Cruise

Thursday 22nd September

We started our holiday a day early. We drove to Peter and Pauline's and left our car there then went by taxi to a hotel near Heathrow Airport because we all had an early flight next day.

Friday 23rd September

We got up at 3am to catch the shuttle bus. We lugged our cases to the bus and with the help of some very young men (that was a bonus) got our cases onto the racks. The flight to Toulouse was on time and a coach took us to pick up our boat at Le Boat in Castelnaudary. We stopped at a supermarket to get our provisions for the week. It's bad enough walking round an English supermarket but a French one was another thing with the difficulty of sorting out what was what in another language! We had a safety briefing and then got on our boat with our cases and bags of shopping. At 6pm we had drinks on the quayside and a birthday cake made by Jackie for Andrew's birthday which was a lovely start to the holiday. We then walked about half a mile to a restaurant that specialises in cassoulet. It was a lovely time to be all together as a group and the meal was very good although there was a lot of beans! When it was time to leave the heavens opened and walking back the four of us got absolutely soaked as did other members. Pauline and I had put on our best white jeans and new trainers. We put all our wet clothes on every peg, hook and chair available and put towels on the floor to soak up the water. When we got to bed, I found my pillow was wet and on further inspection my mattress was also soaked. A leaking window above the bed was the problem. Luckily, we had an extra cabin so changed the mattress over by which time it had stopped raining.



Saturday 24th September

In the morning the engineer came and mended the window. We then cruised to Bram **negotiating 18 locks** some of which were electric. Peter ran up the towpath to start the locks. We now know where his grandson gets his running prowess from!! Unfortunately, it was raining again that evening and Peter and David got soaked mooring up. Our BBQ ended up being cooked in the oven but we had a lovely meal of Pork loins with tomatoes and olives which we called Porc aux Provence.

Sunday 25th September



Today we cruised to Carcassonne (only 7 locks) and an engineer came out to try and fix our heater which hadn't worked since we started but no luck. He left us a small room heater which only worked on shore power. In the afternoon some of us went with Jackie to a supermarket to get food for the club BBQ and helped her carry it all back to the boat. In the evening we had a group dinner at an Italian restaurant. It was a lovely meal in very eclectic surroundings. There was a piano in one of the toilets (so I had a little

"tinkle" on the keys) and a large Rhino head in the other (can't imagine what the men thought about that!).

Monday 26th September

In the morning most of the group went on the bus up to the old Cité and had a guided tour of the citadel. The 4 of us walked into Carcassonne and then caught an electric tour bus that went round the town and up to the Cité. Unfortunately, it had no suspension so we were shaken all over the place. We had lunch and then cruised to Trèbes,

Tuesday 27th September



Today the forecast was for 40 mile an hour winds so we stayed in Trèbes. We walked into the town and found a very nice cafe and treated ourselves to some delicious pastries. Other members of the club came into the cafe and so the owner had a very busy and

fruitful morning. In the afternoon we invited Colin and Daphne Wilford onto our boat for drinks and tried to find out whether we had any joint ancestors. Bob, Diana and Graham then joined

us. In the evening we had our group BBQ organised by Jackie and Mark and with the help of other member's BBQs we were able to get the food cooked. Although the weather wasn't brilliant, we all had a very nice evening.

Wednesday 28th September

We left Trèbes early as the winds weren't expected till later. Unfortunately, we had a gas leak and were told to return to Trèbes. The rest of the boats went on. The engineer wasn't very successful in finding the leak and assured us it was safe. When we started off again, we had a very long wait at the Trèbes locks. At one of the locks, we had to moor up and David jumped off the boat onto the bank and fell over. I waited till he moved before I laughed! The gas leak got worse and we called Le Boat at Homps and they sent out an engineer so we moored up at Pulcheric. He had a good look and tightened up various joints and again assured us that it was safe to use. We cruised on to La Redorte. We cooked our evening meal and then the gas ran out so no tea or coffee.

Thursday 29th September

In the morning Graham very kindly boiled a kettle for us so we could have tea and coffee for breakfast. We then cruised to Homps and arrived at lunchtime and had a quiet relaxing afternoon before packing. In the evening we had the group Gala Dinner at a very nice restaurant. The food and drink was very good and Mark had prepared an excellent slideshow of the week.

Friday 30th September

We had an early start to catch the coach back to Toulouse for the return flight. To add to all the other problems the conveyor belt that takes the cases broke down so we had to leave our cases and hope they arrived at Heathrow. Because of this the plane was delayed but all the luggage did arrive safely. We got a taxi back to Peter and Pauline's to pick up our car and arrived home in the afternoon.

Although we had some problems, we had a great time with plenty of laughs sometimes almost hysterical! We have now joined the club and were so grateful for the kindness and welcome we received from all the club members. We were also very impressed by the information and help we received from Jackie and Mark before and during the holiday. Very many thanks.

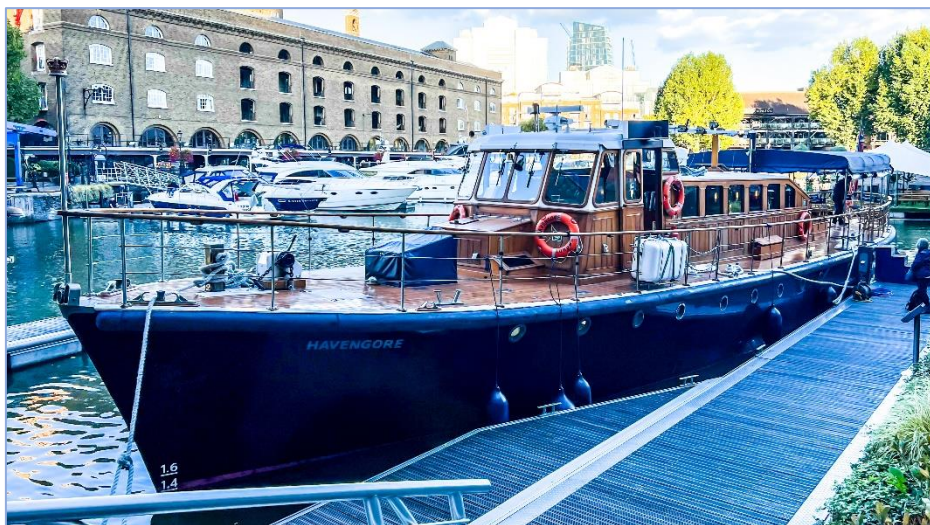
Jo Wilford





Thames Trip on HAVENGORE

10th October 2022



The following poem, penned by Su Knight, perfectly captures our delightful day on the MV Havengore:

*The plans are set, the company's met,
we won't get wet on the Havengore.
The sun is shining, the crew are smiling,
no lines for throwing on the Havengore.*

*We met at St Kats on a bright autumn day,
we boarded the boat and got under way.
The Havengore boasts a past that is glorious,
a man who had helped make Britain victorious
took his last trip in stately procession.
We give thanks for his "bulldog" love and
devotion.*

*A beautiful day, a trip on the river
Jackie and Mark never fail to deliver.
Perfection, a treat, a memory to store
so thank you once more
for our trip on the sweet Havengore.*

Su

The Havengore was of course the iconic vessel that carried the coffin of Sir Winston Churchill from St Paul's Cathedral to Waterloo for the next stage of his journey to his final resting place at St Martin's Church in the village of Bladon, a few short miles from his birthplace at Blenheim Palace.

It was through a personal contact that the TSCC had the opportunity to experience at close hand this historic vessel and to enjoy what turned out to be a gloriously sunny October afternoon on the River Thames.

At 12 noon, 38 of us boarded the vessel in St Katherine's Dock and patiently waited until the lock was

primed and ready for our departure. Once on the river, we motored upstream past the Houses

of Parliament and then down to the barrier which, earlier that morning, had been closed to protect the city from a very high tide. There was a brisk breeze but the sun was in the sky and the sights were there to see. Throughout the trip the bar was open for those who fancied something invigorating, and we were regularly plied with tea and coffee by the highly attentive crew. Half way through the cruise, lunch was unveiled – an individual box of tasty goodies prepared the previous day by Jackie, Janet and George – a very big thanks to all of them.



The owner, Chris Ryland, who has a passionate interest in history, was on board to talk about the boat and answer any questions. The Havengore is a former hydrographic survey ship, launched in 1956 for service with the Port of London Authority. As well as carrying the body of Sir Winston Churchill in 1965, she has also played a prominent role in other major ceremonial events including the river pageant to mark the Queen's Silver Jubilee in 1977. She was then selected in 2012 to carry members of the Royal Family as part of Queen Elizabeth II's Diamond Jubilee celebrations when a flotilla of more than a

thousand vessels processed along the Thames on a particularly rainy day!

Somewhat less glamorously, the vessel was named after Havengore Island, a low-lying marshy island off the coast of Essex. The derivation of the word Havengore is the Old English, 'haefen' meaning an anchorage and 'gor' meaning muddy. The adjoining Havengore Creek marked the northern end of the PLA's jurisdiction prior to 1964, when it was extended to include the whole of the Thames Estuary. By convention, many PLA vessels are named after features of the River Thames.

Our sincerest thanks to Chris Ryland for making the Havengore available to the TSCC. When she next changes hands it is possible that the new owners will want to keep her solely for their own private use with no further possibility of public access. How lucky we are to have savoured the history while the opportunity was there. *Mark* (Article and Photos, Ed.)





THIRTY YEARS OF FUN WITH TSCC

(Unfortunately, there is not enough space to do justice to all our many events)





POLICE HORSES



Thank you to everyone who submitted photos for this edition, I apologise for not giving individual credit but, with over 70 photos, the job just became too big. Ed.

WELCOME ABOARD!

**TSCC extends a warm welcome to new members:
Jo and David Wilford
from Burgess Hill**



We wish them lots of fun and friendship with the Club.

TSCC 2023 Proposed Programme of Events

All dates and events are subject to change

AGM at Ajax HQ	Sun 15 th January
TSCC, WMC, BBC Skittles Match at Hinchley Wood Scout HQ	Sat 4 th February
Sounds of the 60s Live with Tony Blackburn at the New Victoria Theatre, Woking	Tues 28 th March
Fitting Out Event	April
Visit to Guildford Union Workhouse followed by Lunch at Lakeside Restaurant	Mon 15 th May
Warners Getaway	Wed 7 th – Fri 9 th June
Jazz Brunch at Little Compton	Sun 25 th June
Thames Cruise	Mon 10 th – Thurs 14 th July
Open Air Theatre at Hatchlands Park (TBC)	Sun 30 th July
Guided Tour of Clandon Park Restoration (TBC)	Sat 2 nd September
Norfolk Broads Cruise	Tues 12 th – Tues 19 th Sept
Autumn Getaway	October
Annual Dinner	Early November
Christmas Event	Early December

Thames Scout Cruising Club Grants

FINANCIAL SUPPORT FOR SCOUTS/GUIDES

TSCC is always looking for Scouting/Guiding projects which need financial support. If your local Group is in need of funds for specific projects ask them to write a letter to our Secretary giving full details. Our Committee will be pleased to consider all requests.

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Visit our Website: www.tsc.org.uk

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