

VIC 96

Report No 24

Chatham

Julian & Joanna Swift

Saturday 16th April

So as to get ready for the Boiler Inspector next week some of us decided on an extra visit to support the engine room and to push on the painting and re-arrange the hold. First news was that the trip to Ramsgate is off, as it appears that the powers that be did not get the agreement details for the Museum and dockside sorted in time. A bit sad that but we can now organise a pleasant weekend of trips out on the river and at least one Open Day.

So we are all pushing for steam up on Wednesday for inspection and to move coal to the bunkers that afternoon. We will not be hauling the bags over but just up on deck so we need strong volunteers to barrow 10 tonnes of coal over after we have made the handrails removable and fixed some runway boards. Please e-mail or telephone me if you can come by about midday or after to help, that's next Wednesday 20th April. Please!!! It's about 150 to 200 barrows full !

On the coaling front we found we needed to coal up urgently when we freed off the bunker lids and found them well down on coal. So we are going to transfer some so we can go forward with the plan to fill 8 more one tonne water tanks, and of course we need the hold re-organised so as to get the trim right. Mind you, we were reminded of the first trip out at Maryport (you remember-crowds looking on while the helmsman remembered which was his port and starboard) when Louse was told to "hit it harder" when bashing the pin to drive the lid open " better not butt in " we thought, "Derek's there". Bang, Bang, Bang. Tony came up to find out what the din was " try knocking it anti-clockwise"..... Its Ok, we've got plenty of big fenders for the weekend. And don't worry Derek, we wouldn't have another skipper, so Gladys will knit you some nice mittens, red on the left and green on the right.

So thanks to Tony and Steve the boiler is all back together and full of water and engine room work on schedule and some cleaning started down there, another can of cream paint has gone on the coaming, plus other jobs sorting smokey stoves and victuals etc, and the hold is sorted thanks to Derek and Louises' strenuous efforts down there.

The work party was: Tony and Jean, Steve Pettett, Derek and Louise, and Joanna, Julian and Logan.

Forthcoming Dates Tuesday 19th April finalising engine room and lighting fire. Wednesday 20th , steam up, moving coal and boiler inspection. Friday 22nd to Monday 25th , in-steam weekend. Tell us who's coming!

Julian and Joanna