

# VIC 96

Report No 26

Chatham

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(Tuesday 9<sup>th</sup> August 2011)

I am not going to try to put the dates on all the work parties since Report 25 (27th April) suffice to say that lots has been done to prepare the ship for the Ostende trip and Louise has as usual taken over the job of keeping you informed what has been going on with her brilliant videos and photos on the website, while I have been going through the pain and suffering of learning to use my new Mac computer. "What! 3 months to learn that" I hear you all say, but I thought it was quite quick considering how much I lost in the process.

The trip to Ostende was brilliant, if exhausting at 17 or 18 hours each way, but after Jean and Joanna had between them sorted my queazies so I could do my bit in the engine room I really enjoyed my shifts with Tony there and was able to put what I had learned over the years from the team into practice properly for a decent period of time (more about that later). I, and most of us, really like Ostende and it seems they like us, even to the point of shooting that cannon at us every 15 minutes when the kids were there. Barry and our boys had a good time and Barry even went up the top mast of the next door tall ship "just to see if I can do it". And we got a very good donation for our coal and the large number of visitors helped as well.

Since then there has been quite a lot going on with coaling up again etc and various other youngsters (some quite good looking) helped with that. We had a lot of visitors with one or two wishing to help support us. Steve Pettitt has been very helpful in the engine room and a few of us had a day out on Barking at the Medway barge match at short notice which gave us a taste for the Swale match. Tony enjoyed teaching me to drive the engine and keep the Weir pump going while learning how much space the Vic really has to throw coal into the boiler compared with Barkings space and long boiler. What a lovely ship she is though! Memory is bad so thank you all who came at various times.

After a bit of a rush to prepare for the Swale match (the earlier mention of coaling means we now have no coal in the hold, only in the bunkers) there have been a few changes you may notice in the foc'sl and the wheelhouse. We found ourselves short of engineers due to illness so there was a possibility of missing the match but with Richard Seager (from the Brent and other steam vessels) helping on Friday to bring me and Steve up to scratch we had a great weekend with both ships and enjoyed some exhilarating steaming to get there as well as in among the barges etc with Barking on Saturday. The trip back was windy but everybody coped well with the shortage of manpower and the two new boys in the engine room coped well, much to their relief.

Forthcoming dates 20<sup>th</sup> Aug and 3<sup>rd</sup> Sept.

Cleaning ship, sweeping tubes and cleaning engine room Polishing brass!

**Julian and Joanna**

