TRIP OUT

January 1975

Several readers have commented recently on the scope of 'Trip Out' and the amount of detail that I plan to include. When I started publication, I aimed to concentrate on the coastal and inland excursion vessels of England and Wales because these are generally neglected by other publications, and because a limited field is necessary if high standards of accuracy are to be maintained. Many readers, I know, are also interested in the Scottish steamers, but these are already covered in other journals. Similarly, information on cross-channel services is readily available from other sources and their timetables can be obtained from most travel agents, something that is not the case with the smaller passenger vessels. Excursions on unusual routes sometimes offered by cross-channel ships are a different matter and I hope to be able to give advance information of these. I should be interested to have readers' views on whether 'Trip Out' should cover those cross-channel ships that offer regular cruises or day trips (such as the Isle of Man steamers' trips from Liverpool to Llandudno), One piece of information that has been requested is the address or telephone number of operators, I plan to include this when describing a new operator, but for established firms, the address and telephone number will be given in the summary of services to be published at the beginning of the summer,

I should like to thank those who have paid their subscriptions for 1975, I hope 'Trip Out' will enable readers to plan many enjoyable cruises in the coming months.

Geoffrey Hamer

NORTH EAST

Calder Navigation Society's 20-seater launch DOREEN is at Brighouse for the winter. Last summer she carried eighteen parties on the Calder and Hebble Navigation, in addition to making Society trips.

EAST ANGLIA

Stour Valley Cruises ran the LADY CAROLINE, a new 12-passenger launch last summer. The firm has acquired the 30-passenger LENGTHRAN which will enter service at Easter between Ballingdon, Sudbury and Great Cornard. The LADY CAROLINE may be transferred to another section of the river.

THAMES

Don Hickman plans to run the RIVER QUEEN, a 175-ft replica of a Mississippi steamer, between London and Southend next summer. The hull is being fitted out at Southampton at a cost, it is claimed, of £1 million. The vessel will have a stern paddle wheel, but propulsion will be provided by two Schottel units driven by diesel engines.

Speed Hydrofoils Special services to Cadogan Pier, Chelsea, with coach connections to Earl's Court, were planned for the Boat Show (on until 11 January),

Abingdon Marine will be running a 65-ft narrow boat carrying 50 passengers from Newbridge next summer. Trips, mainly for parties, will be at weekends and in the evening only. This is thought to be the only passenger boat operating upstream of Oxford.

SOUTH COAST

Isle of Wight C C A new chain ferry for the Cowes - East Cowes service has been ordered from Groves and Guttridge (East Cowes) Ltd.

CHANNEL ISLANDS

British Rail is to acquire the Swedish SVEA DROTT (1966, 4018 grt). The schedule advertised for next season is similar to last year's, requiring two passenger ships and one car ferry, but it is not clear which ships will be used.

Channel Island Ferries Services were suspended at the beginning of December and, after a proposal for the Commodore Shipping Co to take over the running of the FLEUR DES ILES had been rejected, it was announced that a shareholders' meeting is to be held on 8 January to approve the Company's liquidation. The FLEUR DES ILES, which opened the service between St-Malo, Jersey and Guernsey in July 1973, is expected to be sold. Bad weather and rising costs are blamed for the Company's failure.

Isle of Sark Shipping Co LA DAME DE SEEK made what should be her final trip to Sark on 16 November and she is expected to be delivered to a new owner in Nova Scotia next spring. She spent five seasons on the Sark service, having originally run from Brest, then from Torquay.

R W Taylor, Guernsey The Herm ferry SKYLARK has been offered for sale and, if sold, will be replaced by a larger vessel.

WEST OF ENGLAND

Greenway Ferry Services The Dittisham - Greenway ferry has been withdrawn as it is no longer profitable. The car ferry, built in 1964 and used in summer only, is for sale for £8000.

Isles of Scilly Steamship Co The SCILLONIAN returned to service at the beginning of December after a month-long refit at Falmouth. Sailings are 3-4 times weekly until 11 April, with variations at Easter and during the flower season. From 12 April to 13 October, there is a round trip from Penzance daily (except Sundays), with a double roundtrip on Saturdays from 17 May to 6 September. The day return fare is £4, rising to £4.50 in July and August.

BRISTOL CHANNEL

P & A Campbell The BALMORAL will stay at Dartmouth until the end of February when she will go for drydocking.

MIDLAND WATERWAYS

Leisure Line Canal Cruises, Birmingham This new firm is offering three narrow boats for charter trips from Birmingham and Coventry, The vessels, BRITANNIA, JACEY and ZEUS-HERMES, each seat 48.

MISCELLANY

Two Norwegian passenger/cargo vessels are berthed at Chatham and are for sale. They are the BLOMVAAG (built 1939, 164 grt) and MELANDDROTT (1948, 229 grt); the latter carries 280 passengers and is being offered for £30 000.

TRIP OUT

February 1975

This issue of 'Trip Out' includes a provisional list of special sailings for next season. More information will be given in future issues, and readers who know of farther interesting trips are invited to send details for publication. Some readers have asked that I cover excursion services offered by cross-channel ships and I hope to do this, space permitting, in future issues. The press date for the next issue will be 1 March; items of news for publication are always welcome.

Geoffrey Hamer

SPECIAL CRUISES

Sun 4 May LINCOLN CASTLE - Hull to Goole, organised by the Humber Paddle Steamer Group.
Sun 15 Jun BALMORAL - From Llandudno and Menai Bridge around Anglesey (Coastal Cruising Association).
Sat 28 Jun SOLENT SCENE - cruise from Southampton (CCA).

NORTH EAST

Tyne and Wear PTE A 300-passenger ferry has been ordered from Hancock's of Pembroke Dock for £304 000. She will enter +service between North Shields and South Shields in spring 1976, replacing the FREDA CUNNINGHAM.

Bosun's Line, York The firm's two waterbuses, the BOSUN'S JANE and BOSUN'S SUE, built in 1972, have been offered for sale for £10 000 each.

British Rail The FARRINGFORD and LINCOLN CASTLE were due to go for overhaul in turn during January while a reduced one-ship service operated across the Humber.

THAMES

R G Passenger Launches, Erith A 63-ft 150-passenger catamaran, the CAROUSEL, has been built in Guernsey and will be used on the Dagenham ferry service which the firm runs for Ford workers.

Thames Pleasure Craft The ST GERRANS (built in 1927) has been sold for service at Falmouth, her original home port, after running from Tower Pier for four years.

Salter Bros' public services for next season are much reduced. The season - 25 May to 7 September - is shorter, and only four vessels are needed, based at Oxford (two round trips to Abingdon, daily), Reading (afternoon return trip to Henley), Marlow (daily return trip to Windsor), and Staines (daily round trip to Windsor). A fifth boat is used between 27 July and 25 August for a Windsor-Marlow-Windsor sailing. Other members of the fleet will be available for party trips but at least one vessel, the HENLEY of 1896, is for sale.

Guildford Boat House (River Wey), formerly owned by Leroy's Boat Hire, is now under the same ownership as the Farncombe Boat House at Godalming. The two passenger vessels, the HARRY STEVENS and THE PILGRIM, are to be joined by a new 56-ft wide-beam boat named CHARLES LEROY. The hull was built by Hancock & Lane at Daventry and is now being fitted out at Godalming.

Kennet & Avon Canal Trust The new steam-powered LEVIATHAN carried out trials near Pewsey last autumn. It is hoped to have a certificate to carry 45 passengers next season.

SOUTH COAST

Portsmouth Harbour Ferry Co has sold the VITA for service on the Thames, leaving a fleet of four vessels - the ferries GOSPORT QUEEN and PORTSMOUTH QUEEN (both built in 1966) and the excursion vessels GAY ENTERPRISE (1971) and SOUTHSEA QUEEN (1974),
Taurus Yacht Services have an agreement allowing them to run from Boscombe Pier for the next three seasons so the business, which was for sale last autumn, has presumably not changed hands.
Croson A new vessel is apparently being built for the Bournemouth-Isle of Wight sailings, to replace the BOURNEMOUTH QUEEN.

CHANNEL ISLANDS

British Rail The SVEA DROTT was taken over and renamed EARL GODWIN on 10 January; she will run the CI car ferry service, replacing the FALAISE which is to be broken up in Spain.
Channel Island Ferries Local businessmen are trying to raise £150 000 to enable the firm to continue trading.
Condor Hydrofoil services between Guernsey, Jersey and St-Malo start on 1 March and continue till 20 December. Sark is served daily (except Sundays) between 17 March and 27 September, and Alderney trips are on Tues and Thurs from 25 March to 25 September.
Cie 'Côte des Iles' has chartered the AIGRETTE V (built 1972, 235 passengers) from M Monfort of Benodet; she will run from Portbail to Gorey, replacing the smaller CÔTE DES ILES (1973) which will be sold.
Trident Charter Co, Guernsey The HEM TRIDENT, sold to McAlpines last summer for use in Scotland, is to be renamed LORD OF THE ISLES.

BRISTOL CHANNEL

P & A Campbell Easter sailings include day trips from Penarth and Weston to Ilfracombe on Sat 29 and Sun 30 March. Subsequent trips from up-channel ports are at alternate weekends, as last year, starting at the Spring Bank. Holiday. Fares will be about 15% higher than last year. Passengers will be carried from the Bristol Channel to Menai Bridge on 13/14 June if the DoT gives permission; after the CCA charter round Anglesey, the BALMORAL will tender the liner GRIPSHOLM at Fleetwood and Llandudno. The annual Isles of Scilly cruise will be on 10-13 October.

NORTH WEST

Chester Packet The BETELGEUSE has been bought from Stroudwater Carriers by Mr J B Marshall who has operated the boat on horse-drawn trips from Chester for the past two seasons.
Merseyside PTE Co-op Travel is chartering the EGREMONT for Manchester Ship Canal cruises on six weekends, 24-25 May, 28-29 June, 12-13 July, 9-10 August and 6-7 & 20-21 September; in each case there is a Liverpool-Manchester sailing on the Saturday and a Manchester-Liverpool trip on the Sunday. The single fare is £1.75 and a round trip by rail/boat costs £2.55.

TRIP OUT

March 1975

Many excursion operators start their season at Easter, so this is the last "winter" issue of 'Trip Out'. The summary of services, listing all known operators in England and Wales, with their addresses, phone numbers and fleet details, will be distributed with the May issue. New subscribers can still be accepted - if you know of anyone who would appreciate the news coverage I provide, please tell them about 'Trip Out'. The next issue will go to press on 3 April.

Geoffrey Hamer

SPECIAL CRUISES

Sun 4 May LINCOLN CASTLE - Hull to Goole, organised by the Humber Paddle Steamer Group.
Sat 14 Jun SOLENT SCENE - cruise from Southampton (Paddle Steamer Preservation Society).
Sun 15 Jun BALMORAL - from Llandudno and Menai Bridge around Anglesey (Coastal Cruising Association).
Sun 29 Jun SOLENT SCENE - cruise from Southampton (CCA).
Sun 3 Aug LINCOLN CASTLE - from Hull to the river Trent (PSPS).
Sat 30 Aug QUEEN OF THE BROADS - from Great Yarmouth (PSPS).

Only sailings of general interest are included in the above list - trips limited to a small party of members of a society are not listed here.

EAST ANGLIA

Chelmer & Blackwater Navigation A 55-ft 48-passenger vessel has been built for the canal's proprietors by Bingley Marine. She will operate between Chelmsford and Heybridge Basin.

$tour Valley Cruises The LADY CAROLINE will be used in the opening ceremony of Flatfard Lock on Easter Saturday. Regular trips from Ballingdon Bridge, Sudbury, start at Easter, and cover the river as far as the Swan Inn at Henny.

THAMES

Don Hickman The hull being fitted out as a replica of a Mississippi steamer is that of the former Mersey ferry J FARLEY, built in 1922. Between 1952 and 1973 she was owned by the Admiralty and was used as a floating laboratory at Portland. She then went to Hayle, Cornwall, before being towed to Southampton in spring 1974 to start her conversion.

J P T Coakley, Tower Pier, has acquired the 170-passenger VAROS from Southampton.

A T Woods Tower Pier, is the new owner of the VITA from Gosport.

Golding Bros, Windsor A new vessel, THE JOHN ANDREWS, was completed by Thames Launch Works at Twickenham last autumn. She replaces THE MONARCH I which has been sold.

Scenics, Reading, began operating last season with the SCENIC I. This year she is to be joined by the 45-ft 90-seat PRIDE OF TEST, last in passenger service at Southampton in 1971. Afternoon trips from Reading to Mapledurham House will run on Wednesdays, Saturdays and Sundays, starting on Easter Sunday.

SOUTH COAST

Blue Funnel The VAROS has been sold for service on the Thames (see above), having been replaced by the new SOLENT SCENE last season.

Croson The new vessel for the Isle of Wight sailings is being built by J Bolson & Son at Poole. Like the DORSET BELLE, built last year, she is being fabricated in the ship repair yard and the hull will be lifted into the water by crane. Since her sale to McAlpine last autumn, the BOURNEMOUTH QUEEN has been running between Rothesay and Ardyne; she is to be renamed QUEEN OF SCOTS.

R H Wills & Son, Weymouth The WEYMOUTH BELLE has been sold, apparently for work in the North Sea oil industry. Wills retain the smaller NEW BRITANNIC.

CHANNEL ISLANDS

Jersey Car Ferries The JERSEY QUEEN has been sold to a Mr E E P Goodeve of Guernsey; she went to Gweek, Cornwall, late last year and is being refitted, apparently for survey work in West Africa.

BRISTOL CHANNEL

Dyfed County Council The Cleddau bridge is due to open on 8 March. The ferry service between Hobbs Point and Neyland will cease on the 7th and the vessels, CLEDDAU KING (built 1962, 151 gross tons) and CLEDDAU QUEEN (1956, 158 grt), are to be sold.

MIDLAND WATERWAYS

Worcester Steamer Co (owned by Bass Charrington) has acquired two barges from the British Waterways Board for conversion to passenger vessels. They are the C/S 7 and C/S 8, both built at Beaumaris in 1959 and measuring 105 gross tons. The C/S 8 has been renamed PRIDE OF THE MIDLANDS.

M E Braine The narrow boats CACTUS and JUBILEE will be available for charter trips from Great Haywood, Staffs, from April to October.

Nene Valley Cruises The AQUARIUS will be offering short river trips from Billing Aquadrome, Northampton, every Sunday from Easter to end-September.

NORTH WEST

Isle of Man Steam Packet Co Day trips from Liverpool to Llandudno with an afternoon cruise along the Anglesey coast operate on Sundays and Thursdays from 1 June to 11 September (except Sunday 8 June) and on Tuesdays in July and August. The season of day trips from Llandudno to Douglas starts on 26 May and the first Fleetwood to Douglas trip is on 25 May.

MISCELLANY

The former Humber paddler TATTERSHALL CASTLE, now being refitted at Immingham, is to be moved this summer to her new berth in London alongside the Embankment between Westminster and Charing Cross bridges. She will be used as an art gallery, lecture centre and bookshop.

TRIP OUT

April 1975

Starting with this issue, I am not giving a separate list of special charter sailings; to save space, details will appear in the relevant geographical section. Sailings for which bookings should be made this month are the LINCOLN CASTLE's Goole cruise on 4 May, and the cruise round Anglesey on 15 June.

Geoffrey Hamer

NORTH EAST

British Rail The LINCOLN CASTLE returned to service after her annual refit on 12 February; on 27 February she collided with a coaster in fog and repairs in the Alexandra Dock, Hull, were expected to take two weeks. Tickets for the cruise to Goole on 4 May (£2 adult, £1 child) can be obtained from Mrs E M Beadle.

THAMES

Services between Westminster, Tower and Greenwich reverted to the summer schedule before Easter, and sailings from Westminster to Kew, Richmond and Hampton Court were resumed. The Battersea - Westminster service has been withdrawn and the boats are instead offering 45-minute non-landing cruises from Westminster to St Paul's and the Tate Gallery.

Guildford Boat House are promoting trips on the Thames this summer in conjunction with R J Turk & Sons of Kingston. There will be sailings between Hampton Court (depart 1100) and Kingston (dep 1400)$_1$ with a journey time of hours, and 1-hr cruises from Hampton Court,

Kennet & Avon Canal Trust The KENNET WATER, which was leased to the Trust and used for public trips at Reading, is to be sold. The Trust is looking for a replacement vessel.

Lea Valley Regional Park Authority The LEE PRINCESS started at Easter and offers short public cruises from Broxbourne on Sunday afternoons; she does charters on other days. Later in the season, she will be based at Springfield Marina, Clapton.

SOUTH COAST

Portsmouth Corporation The Hayling ferry SINAH sank at her moorings on 19 March and the service was suspended for about two days until a replacement could be obtained. The other regular vessel, the IRIS, was being refitted at the time.

CHANNEL ISLANDS

Condor The CONDOR 4 opened the season on 1 March and was joined by the CONDOR 3 on the 16th.

Channel Island Ferries announced in early March that they would recommend to shareholders a takeover bid by Commodore shipping. Before the offer could be finalized, the FLEUR DES ILES was sold to Rederi AB Eckerö of Finland, apparently to avoid the possibility of her being arrested by creditors. She left Jersey on 27 March for Southampton for drydocking prior to delivery. CIF plan to operate a twice-weekly service between St-Malo and Jersey using the chartered MARY POPPINS which is due to start a Southampton - St-Malo service on 28 May.

Inter Island Ferry, Guernsey, operators of the Herm launch MAYWOOD, have been taken over by L O'Brien, owner of the Perm Express Ferry.
Others The BELLE DE JERSEY (Vedettes Blanches) began running on 22 March, the AIGRETTE V (Cie Côte des Iles) started on 25 March, and the KEVRENN (Vedettes Armoricaines) opened her season on the 28th.

WEST OF ENGLAND

River Dart Steamboat Co announced on 14 March that because of falling traffic the passenger service will be withdrawn. The Co, whose history can be traced back over 100 years, has been a subsidiary of the Evans & Reid Investment Co Ltd of Cardiff in recent years. The three vessels which are to be sold are the CONWAY CASTLE (built in 1963) and CARDIFF CASTLE (1964), each carrying 400 passengers, and the 250-passenger DARTMOUTH CASTLE (1948). Services between Dartmouth and Totnes will still be provided by Paddon & Crews, and by G H Ridalls & Son.
Others Three Torbay vessels sailed at Easter - the PRIDE OF THE BAY from Torquay, CORAL STAR III from Paignton, and BONNIE BOYS from Brixham - but traffic was poor.

BRISTOL CHANNEL

P & A Campbell Following the Easter sailings, there is a break until 29 April and, until regular sailings start on 20 May there is a varied sailing programme with several charters. The National Trust has two charters in May - on the 18th from Swansea direct to Lundy and on the 31st from Ilfracombe and Bideford to Lundy. The BALMORAL's voyage to North Wales, leaving Penarth and Weston on the evening of 13 June for Menai Bridge, is being advertised at a single fare of £10; Bristol Channel sailings are resumed on 19 June.

MIDLAND WATERWAYS

Brummagem Boats, Birmingham, offer public trips from Gas Street Basin in the city centre. An afternoon cruise to Selly Oak runs at 1430 on Sundays until 28 September, and there is a varied programme of full day trips and shorter cruises.

NORTH WALES AND NORTH WEST

Merseyside PTE The EGREMONT is laid up in Morpeth Dock, Birkenhead, and has been offered for sale. Built at Dartmouth in 1952, she can carry 1340 passengers; her sistership, the LEASOWE, went to Greece a year ago. The Mersey fleet will consist of five vessels - four ferries and the cruise vessel ROYAL IRIS; the EGREMONT's withdrawal means that another vessel will have to make the Manchester cruises.
D Ashcroft, Preston The SHELAGH is being chartered by the Lancaster Canal Trust for public trips on two dates - on 13 July from Garstang to Glasson Dock and back and on 31 August from Lancaster to Garstang via Glasson Dock.

TRIP OUT

May 1975

Part of the 'Trip Out' summary of services is being sent with this issue, but the second section describing the services provided will I regret not be ready till next month. The enclosed list covers all known operators in England, Wales and the Channel Islands, giving (where appropriate) their operating base, vessels (with year of build and gross register tonnage), address and telephone number. The accuracy of the information cannot be guaranteed; corrections and additional information reported to me will be included in future issues of 'Trip Out'.

Also being distributed with this issue are copies of the WAVERLEY's schedule; though outside the scope of 'Trip Out', I think this will be of interest to most readers.

Geoffrey Hamer

NORTH EAST

British Rail The next charter of the LINCOLN CASTLE is to the Trent on 3 August. On 17 August she will visit Grimsby on a trip sponsored by 'Ships Monthly'

EAST ANGLIA

Chelmer & Blackwater Navigation The new vessel VICTORIA should now be in service for charter trips.

THAMES

J P T Coakley, Tower Pier The VAROS is being chartered by the Thames Ship Society on 18 May for a day trip from Tower Pier, Greenwich and Tilbury to Southend.

Speed Hydrofoils A larger craft, the KOMETA WORLD TRADER, was unloaded at Lowestoft on 15 April after shipment from Yalta, and sailed to London later in the day. After trials, she is due to run a month's experimental service on the Clyde.

Tideway Passenger Boat Co's small open launches have all been sold over the past year or so; the VIKING M is now with the F & B Boat Co at Walton, the TEDDINGTON is used by the 'Sloop John D' nightclub at Battersea, the BAY QUEEN is with H Hastings at Kingston, and the TWICKENHAM runs for another Westminster operator. The remaining vessels, SKYLARK X and TIDEWAY, are doing 45-minute non-landing cruises from Westminster.

Discover Galapagos Public trips on the Medway aboard the GOLDEN CORMORANT are on Wednesday afternoons from 7 May to 24 September (except 27 August), leaving Strood at 1415 and 1600.

SOUTH COAST

Croson The DORSET BELLE opens the season on 8 may with a morning Dorset Lakes cruise and two afternoon Swanage trips daily, except on 11 May when she is chartered by the Purbeck National Park Committee for a 6¼-hour cruise from Poole. Fares have been increased by 20% this season and all sailings will use Bournemouth Pier; the Beach Jetty built by Bolson in 1947 is to be demolished as it needs heavy repairs. The hull of the new vessel was completed in early April and work is proceeding on the superstructure; it is 86 ft long and is expected to have a Class VI certificate for 220 passengers - only half the size of the BOURNEMOUTH QUEEN.

CHANNEL ISLANDS

British Rail The SARNIA replaced the CAESAREA on 24 April but was withdrawn after 5 days because of turbine trouble while the CAESAREA returned to service. The ex-Swedish EARL GODWIN will not be ready till after the summer season and the car ferry service will be taken by the CALEDONIAN PRINCESS from 11 July.

Channel Island Ferries The FLEUR DES ILES left Southampton for Finland on 10 April under her new name ROSPIGGEN.

Cie 'Côte des Iles' The AIGRETTE V made a cruise from Gorey to St Helier on 20 April and further such trips are expected this season.

MIDLAND WATERWAYS

B A J Nicoll, Watford Public cruises from Cassiobury Park are on Sundays at 1430, 1600 and 1730 until 28 September. Longer afternoon trips are planned for Saturdays 19 July and 16 August north to Kings Langley and on 2 August and 13 September south to Copper Mill. An all-day single trip from Rickmansworth to Little Venice is scheduled for 4 October.

Nene Valley Cruises Mr Freeborn, owner of the AQUARIUS, is offering the business as a going concern for £12 000.

MISCELLANY

The former Oban excursion steamer KING GEORGE V arrived at Cardiff on 22 April under tow, having been bought by the C H Bailey Group for possible use as a floating restaurant.

The NORWEST LAIRD, laid up at Hayle for over a year, is for sale again; her owners, Courage, have presumably dropped any idea of using her as a floating pub.

The JERSEY QUEEN - operated by Jersey Car Ferries in 1973 - left Falmouth on 29 March for Las Palmas.

www.trip-out.co.uk © G P Hamer 8 May 1975

TRIP OUT

June 1975

NORTH EAST

British Rail The Midland & Great Northern Joint Railway Society is chartering the LINCOLN CASTLE on 6 July for a sailing from New Holland to Grimsby in connection with a special train from London St Pancras.

EAST ANGLIA

Pleasure Steamers, Great Yarmouth The ss QUEEN OF THE BROADS is being chartered by the PSPS on 30 August for a cruise to Oulton Broad. There will be a connecting coach from London.

THAMES

Catamaran Cruisers Public day trips from Greenwich to Kew are scheduled for alternate Sundays from 3 August to 28 September.

J P T Coakley, Tower Pier The VAROS is being chartered by the Thames Ship Society again on 30 August for a day trip from Tower Pier, Greenwich and Tilbury to Southend, viewing the sailing ships in the Port of London Clipper Regatta.

Thames Pleasure Craft Shortly after entering service from Tower Pier, the ex Gosport ferry VESTA has been offered for sale for £18 000; she has a Class V certificate for 200 passengers.

Speed Hydrofoils The H S RAKETA GREENWICH has been joined by the H S RAKETA THAMES which was shipped from the Black Sea this spring. Both craft are running from Westminster and Tower Piers to Greenwich (fare £1.50 return).

Thames Motor. Boat Co (Westminster) The TAMAR BELLE has been sold to the Tideway Passenger Boat Co who have now offered her for sale again.

G Wheeler, Westminster The 170-passenger QUEEN BOADICEA II has been sold and is now at Dartmouth.

SOUTH COAST

Portsmouth Harbour Ferry Co With only two excursion vessels, the Co's programme is much reduced and only 2 or 3 Portsmouth Harbour cruises are scheduled from the Southsea Piers each day. From 16 June, there are day trips to Cowes on MTThF from Gosport and Southsea and, also on MTThF, an afternoon cruise from Southsea to Southampton Docks. On Wednesdays, the GAY ENTERPRISE does an evening dinner dance cruise from Gosport and the South Parade Pier.

R D Downer & M C Smith, Hamble, took over the 50-passenger STAR QUEEN 3 from R A Barrett before the 1973 season. She offered short cruises on the Hamble River but was for sale last autumn.

Taurus Yacht Services The ISLAND QUEEN opened her season on 25 May, sailing on the same schedule as in previous years.

Croson The new vessel was launched on 23 May as the BOURNEMOUTH BELLE; she is due to start Isle of Wight sailings on 11 June. The POOLE BELLE entered service on 25 May, alternating with the DORSET BELLE on Swanage and Dorset Lakes trips. This year the afternoon Dorset Lakes cruise leaves 30 minutes later at 1500 and there is a ½-hr round-the-bay cruise at 1415.

R H Wills & Son, Weymouth The NEW BRITANNIC began her trips round Portland Harbour on 25 May. The buyer of the WEYMOUTH BELLE, was Frederick Newton, operator of the Cromarty-Nigg ferry.

CHANNEL ISLANDS

British Rail The SARNIA returned to service on 15 May; during her absence the CAESAREA made two round trips from Guernsey to Weymouth within 24 hours on 2/3 May to accommodate a charter sailing. The CAESAREA will finish CI service on 6 October and will replace the MAID OF ORLEANS at Dover in 1976.

Isle of Sark Shipping Co The Sunday trips round Sark and to Alderney offered in previous years are not running this year; there is a return trip to Sark (landing for residents only) on Sunday afternoons.

WEST OF ENGLAND

K Cooper, Torouay, will not be operating this season. The MIDLAND has been sold and in May sailed from Torquay to London where she is now berthed in St Katharine's Dock. She ran at Torquay for only two seasons after spending most of her life in Norway.

BRISTOL CHANNEL

P & A Campbell Sailings from Penarth and Weston *in* the coming weeks are on 13, 27-30 June 11 July (Weston only), 12-14 and 25-27 July to Ilfracombe (continuing to land on Lundy on Sundays) and on 28 July to Mumbles.

Misc The ST TRILLO left Barry under tow on 21 April for Dublin where she is to be broken up. She had been at Barry since September 1969 when she was withdrawn by P & A Campbell.

MIDLAND WATERWAYS

Warwickshire Fly Boat Co, Coventry, is using the 49-seat narrow boat LANCING for charter trips; she was acquired from J Hewitt, Marple, last autumn.

NORTH WEST

Merseyside PTE Afternoon cruises on the ROYAL DAFFODIL or ROYAL IRIS from Liverpool (dep 1515, one hour earlier on Sundays) and Seacombe run on WSSu this month, daily except Mondays in July and August, and on SSu 6-14 September. The Co-op charters to and from Manchester are being taken by the ROYAL DAFFODIL this year.

 © G P Hamer 8 June 1975

TRIP OUT

July 1975

NORTH EAST

Fred Charville, Middlesbrough, plans to run cruises on the Tees with a new 200-passenger vessel named CAPTAIN JAMES COOK. She apparently cost £100 000 and was built of steel by Tyne Tees Fabrication, a firm run by Mr Charville.

Hill's Boatyard, York After buying the GONDOLIER last winter, the firm now wants another vessel, to carry about 100 passengers.

EAST ANGLIA

Broadland Chalets, Oulton Broad, have introduced a new 50-seat waterbus, the SPIRIT OF BROADLAND, on charter trips.

THAMES

Arthur Jacobs, Windsor Two new 100-passenger steel vessels are in service this season. Named WINDSOR CONSORT and WINDSOR CROWN, they are similar to the WINDSOR REGENT and WINDSOR ROYAL.

Kennet & Avon Canal Trust The 50-passenger KENNET WATER which was run by the Reading branch has been sold to an operator on the River Trent. The Trust hopes to obtain a new vessel for next year.

SOUTH COAST

Star Boats, Southampton, have sold the 64-passenger SOUTHAMPTON STAR to Anthony Stuart of Exmouth.

Red Funnel The 1974 Annual Report states that the number of ferry passengers was less than in 1973 but this was more than offset by an increase in hydrofoil traffic. The CARISBROOKE CASTLE was sold for £200 000 more than her book value.

Croson The BOURNEMOUTH BELLE entered service on 16 June. She is 86 ft long, 21½ ft wide, and carries 228 passengers at 11 knots. She is very similar in appearance to the smaller DORSET BELLE.

CHANNEL ISLANDS

British Rail Next year, the EARL GODWIN will sail daily from Weymouth and nightly from Jersey, with the CALEDONIAN PRINCESS running by day from Jersey and nightly from Weymouth; only daytime sailings will call at Guernsey. This timetable will run from 24 May to 2 October; the SARNIA will make additional sailings at peak weekends only.

Isle of Sark Shipping Co The new launch was lowered into the water on 10 June and entered service on the 18th as L' ESPRIT DE SERK. She carries 97 passengers and apparently cost £60 000. LA DAME DE SEEK, sold last winter, is being offered for charter by her new owner.

Herm Ferries are using the HERM CLIPPER for afternoon cruises to the south coast of Guernsey, leaving St Peter Port at 1415 on TThSu.

Hovercross plan to run an HM2 craft between Jersey and Carteret.

WEST OF ENGLAND

Western Lady Ferry Service All four vessels are in service this season and sailings are similar to previous years' but most fares have been increased by 50% (Torquay-Brixham is now 45p single).

River Dart Steamboat Co The DARTMOUTH CASTLE was sold in March and is now at Plymouth; the firm's two other vessels, the CARDIFF CASTLE and CONWAY CASTLE, are still for sale.

P J Moule, Salcombe, has taken over the RIVER MAID's Kingsbridge to Salcombe service from Gidley Bros.

Millbrook Steamboat & Trading Co were the buyers of the DARTMOUTH CASTLE. She is the largest in this fleet which now consists of eight vessels.

J C Dandy, St Mawes, has been running the LOOK AHEAD II, at one time owned by Green & Clode. She has now been offered for sale for £13 000.

MIDLAND WATERWAYS

Leisure Line Canal Cruises, Birmingham The company's third narrow boat, originally to have been named ZEUS-HERMES, entered service last spring as the EUROPE.

NORTH WALES AND NORTH WEST

P & A Campbell The BALMORAL successfully completed her northern duties - an evening charter cruise from Menai Bridge on 14 June, the cruise round Anglesey on the 15th, and tendering to the GRIPSHOLM at Fleetwood and at Llandudno on 16-17 June.

www.trip-out.co.uk © G P Hamer 7 July 1975

TRIP OUT

August 1975

With the superb weather of this summer, the urge to get afloat has been harder to resist than ever, and the excursion operators must be doing well.

Two events to note later this month are the Inland Waterways Association's Festival at York on 22-25 August, and the Port of London Clipper Regatta on 23-30 August. Both should offer interesting sights and cruise opportunities for the enthusiast.

Geoffrey Hamer

NORTH EAST

Calder Navigation Society In addition to trips from Wakefield, Castleford and Dewsbury, the DOREEN has been to the Pocklington Canal (19-20 July) and will visit York for the IWA Festival.

THAMES

Meridian Line Cruises The SWANAGE QUEEN made a well-patronised public day trip from Greenwich to Southend on 20 July (I apologise for not getting details in time for the last issue of 'Trip Out'). Another trip is planned for Thursday 14 August (Fare £2, advance booking recommended).

Greater London Council The JOHN BURNS went under Tower Bridge to the Upper Pool on 12 July with handicapped children; this annual trip is believed to be the only cruise made by the Woolwich ferries.

Matthews & Son The FATHER THAMES appears to be out of use - she is laid up at Cadogan Pier; the booking address and telephone number given in the List of Operators no longer apply.

Tideway Passenger Boat Co and others The new 45-minute cruises from Westminster appear to be popular; the boats providing them are the CLAIREST (a *new* waterbus built by Caribbean Cruisers), MARY LOUISE, SKYLARK X, TIDEWAY and TWICKENHAM.

Scenics, Reading The PRIDE OF TEST has been fitted with a saloon and bar and now carries 71 passengers. Afternoon trips to visit Mapledurham House leave Caversham Bridge at 1415 on WSSu until 28 September.

Lea Valley Narrowboat Co is running the narrow boat HOLLAND on charter trips from Ware. She was built in 1938 and converted to carry 48 passengers by M E Braine of Norton Canes Docks last winter.

SOUTH COAST

Short trips from Brighton beach are being offered by two 12-passenger launches, the PEACE AND PLENTY and SALLYMATT; the latter is based at Shoreham and passengers are accepted on a single trip to that port leaving at about 1730.

Portsmouth Corporation The 55-passenger SINAH which sank in March did not return to service and has been offered for sale.

Portsmouth Harbour Ferry Co The Offshore Powerboat Club has chartered a vessel for a Solent cruise to view the Cowes-Torquay race on 24 August, leaving Gosport 0800 and Cowes 0900. Fare £2.75. Last year the Club used the WEYMOUTH BELLE.

CHANNEL ISLANDS

British Rail The CALEDONIAN PRINCESS replaced the NORMANNIA on the car ferry service on 15 July.

Isle of Sark Shipping Co LA DAME DE SERK left Guernsey on 15 June for London where she is now in St Katharine's Dock.

Hovercross began running on 1 July from Gorey to Carteret and Sark.

Cie Côte des Iles are chartering the AIGRETTE V for the Portbail to Gorey service for a further five years. Cruises round Jersey are scheduled for 7, 21 August, 10 and 23 September; trips from Gorey to Sark are planned for 8, 12, 22, 26 August, 6 and 11 September.

Vedettes Armoricaines A new vessel has been ordered to replace the KEVRENN. She will be 126 ft long and will carry 300 passengers at 19 knots.

WEST OF ENGLAND

Dart Pleasure Cruises Ltd was formed last year by Paddon & Crews. The DUCHESS OF YORK and QUEEN BOADICEA have been joined by the 170-passenger QUEEN BOADICEA II from Westminster and, with the closure of the River Dart Steamboat Co, the firm is doing good business. Departure times from Dartmouth and Totnes vary according to tides, etc.

BRISTOL CHANNEL

P & A Campbell The annual Newport Harbour Commissioners charter to Weston was on 11 July. Swansea sailings continue till 28 September on the usual pattern, sailings from Penarth and Weston in the next two months are on 8-11, 22-24, 29 August, 5-8, and 19-22 September. There is a day trip from Swansea and Mumbles to Tenby and Lundy on 27 September - the season's only Tenby trip. There are no public trips to Bideford this year.

MIDLAND WATERWAYS

Western Cruisers, Stratford, have introduced a second passenger vessel, based further up the River Avon at Warwick.

Grebe Canal Cruises, Marsworth, are running the new 47-seat narrow boat GREBE on the Grand Union Canal, doing charter trips as far as Aylesbury, Bletchley and Hemel Hempstead. There are public trips on many dates.

NORTH WEST

Merseyside PTE The new Liverpool landing stage has been used since 13 July. There are two berths, one of which is occupied by the ROYAL IRIS at lunchtimes.

 © G P Hamer 6 August 1975

TRIP OUT

September 1975

Now that the 1975 season is nearly over, I am trying to assess the usefulness of 'Trip Out' so that I can make plans for 1976. In particular, I should like to know how readers think the 'Summary of Services' and 'List of Operators' could be improved to form a really valuable guide to the services available. Accurate and comprehensive records are essential for good news coverage and I hope that, now most of the gaps in my records have been filled, coverage will improve.

Geoffrey Hamer

NORTH EAST

Bosun's Line, York, are no longer running river trips. The waterbuses BOSUN'S JANE and BOSUN'S SUE have been sold to Jacobite Cruises for service on the Caledonian Canal and have been renamed JACOBITE CHIEFTAIN and JACOBITE CLANSMAN (it is not clear which is which).

Hill's Boatyard, York The GONDOLIER, acquired from Falmouth last autumn, has been renamed PRINCESS ROYAL.

THAMES

The ex-paddle steamer PRINCESS ELIZABETH has moved to a new berth just above London Bridge and is again open as a pub and restaurant. She has a black hull and red and black funnel - the colours she bore for most of her active life.

SOUTH EAST

Pocock's Motor Boats, Margate The business has been taken over by M J Pett of Ramsgate.

M J Pett, Ramsgate Because Margate Jetty is closed for repairs this season, the NEW GOLDEN SPRAY (formerly Pocock's) is running cruises from Ramsgate, replacing the NEW OCEAN DAWN which has been sold. There are thus no sea trips available from Margate.

SOUTH COAST

D W T Hooper & B Ragless, Bognor, took over the PIXIE MATTHEWS from Britten & Jarvis before the 1974 season.

Red Funnel The hydrofoil SHEARWATER 2, last used in 1971, was sold to Offshore Workboats Ltd and is believed to have been refitted this summer at Lymington.

V H Stallard, Alum Bay, runs the 53-passenger MAVERICK on short cruises round the Needles. The boat berths overnight at Yarmouth.

Croson The BOURNEMOUTH BELLE's gross tonnage is 50 - little more than half that of the smaller DORSET BELLE. The Isle of Wight sailings this season leave Bournemouth at 1000 daily (except Saturdays), and leave Yarmouth at 1615 on MWFSu and at 1700 on TTh (when there is a trip from Yarmouth to Bournemouth giving two hours ashore). Passengers joining at Swanage (calls are made on Mondays and Fridays) and Poole must book in advance.

WEST OF ENGLAND

N F Holman, Torquay, no longer runs trips with the WHITE THISTLE.

W G Pill, Falmouth, was the buyer of the ST GERRANS from London. She was at Falmouth from 1927 till 1967, and went to the Thames after two seasons at Eastbourne. She now runs from the Custom House Quay with the MAY QUEEN and TAMAR BELLE.

BRISTOL CHANNEL

P & A Campbell After a successful season, the BALMORAL seems certain to run in 1976. There have so far been no cancellations caused by breakdowns or bad weather.

K I C Oxenham, Lynmouth, has introduced a new 43-passenger fibreglass launch OCTOBER MORNING on trips as far as Ilfracombe. Mr Oxenham's other vessel is the BALAENA.

MIDLAND WATERWAYS

H & B P Wood, Nottingham, took over the business of Brookhouse & Newell. Advertised as the Sherwood Line, the PRINCESS MARIE and SYLVIA II run half-hour trips from the Victoria Embankment.

NORTH WALES AND NORTH WEST

Welsh Canal Holiday Craft Public trips along the canal at Llangollen cost 30p and last 45 minutes; the boats, which are unnamed, are all horse-drawn. The Pontcysyllte Aqueduct has been closed since cracks were discovered in the ironwork on 13 June and trips there have ceased, but 2-hour trips for parties only are run to the Horseshoe Falls.

MISCELLANY

Fares on British Rail's Humber, Tilbury-Gravesend, Isle of Wight and Channel Island services are being increased on 7 September.

The MIDLAND, from Torquay, and LA DAME DE SERK, from Guernsey, are still laid up in St Katharine's Dock, London.

www.trip-out.co.uk © G P Hamer 2 September 1975

TRIP OUT

October 1975

NORTHEAST

Seahouses The vessels running to the Farne Islands have been joined this year by the 54-passenger OCEAN DAWN, formerly the NEW OCEAN DAWN of Ramsgate.

Bosun's Line York Though the two largest vessels have been sold (see last issue), the 78-passenger WATER PRINCE continues to operate between York and Bishopthorpe.

EAST ANGLIA

C J Lovewell, Norwich, has introduced the PRINCESS MARGARET, a 24-passenger launch formerly owned by Broads Tours and now converted to steam power. This summer she made short cruises upriver from the Nelson Hotel near Norwich station.

THAMES

Last year's innovation of running a winter service between Westminster, Tower Pier and Greenwich is being repeated this year.

Don Hickman Husband's Shipyard of Southampton are bringing an action in the High Court to recover over £5000 from Mr Hickman for conversion work and mooring dues for the former Mersey ferry J FARLEY Which is still at their yard. Hickman, whose present whereabouts is apparently unknown, claimed that £1 million would be spent converting the vessel into a replica of a Mississippi steamer.

Tideway Passenger Boat Co, Westminster A new steel saloon vessel, the TIDEWAY VENTURE, has been completed by Thames Launch Works at Twickenham.

Arthur Jacobs, Windsor The WINDSOR CROWN (see July issue) is not a new vessel - she is the WINDSOR I which was renamed after having a saloon and upper deck added.

Aquadine Enterprises, Wargrave, began operating this season with the new 100-passenger saloon vessel PINK CHAMPAGNE. She is based at the St George and Dragon Hotel in Wargrave, and does short public trips and charter work.

SOUTH COAST

Red Funnel The COWES CASTLE and NORRIS CASTLE are to be lengthened by 30 ft and converted to 'drive-through' ships this winter at Boele's yard at Bolnes, Rotterdam. The COWES CASTLE is to leave for Holland this month and is expected back by Christmas. The NORRIS CASTLE will go to Rotterdam in the new year.

Croson The BOURNEMOUTH BELLE visited Buckler's Hard on a charter on 19 September - the first time a Croson vessel has been there. The firm has had a very successfUl season; the BOURNEMOUTH BELLE, whose capacity is only half that of her predecessor, ran to capacity every day in the peak season. The WESSEX BELLE, sold by Croson after the 1973 season, has been converted into a luxury yacht and is based at Poole, being available for "angling parties, cruises and conferences,"

CHANNEL ISLANDS

British Rail The CAESAREA makes her last sailing from the CI on 6 October before going to the Straits of Dover. The SARNIA is expected to offer a weekly Weymouth-Guernsey day trip next summer.

Vedettes Blanches, St-Malo The BELLE DE JERSEY made two Jersey-Sark day tripS in August and they are expected to become a regular feature next year.

WEST OF ENGLAND

South Hams District Council Since the Dartmouth-Kingswear ferry fare were raised in the spring (to 10p single for passengers and 40p for cars), there has been a 25% fall in traffic compared with past years. The Council is trying to find a way of running the services more economically.

Isles of Scilly Steamship Co Daily (except Sundays) sailings continue till 13 October, after which the SCILLONIAN sails from Penzance on TThS and from St Mary's on MWF. Tenders have been invited for a new ship to replace the SCILLONIAN but as the cost is expected to be £2 million, the order cannot be placed without a Government loan.

Misc The ps COMPTON CASTLE, moored at Kingsbridge as a floating Café, has been sold to a Gloucester businessman who apparently hopes to use her as a restaurant cruising between Kingsbridge and Salcombe.

BRISTOL CHANNEL

P & A Campbell After the weekend trip to St Ives, Penzance and the Isles of Scilly on 10-13 October, the BALMORAL sails out of Ilfracombe on the 14th (to Lundy) and 15th (cruise to Porlock Bay), and the final public trip of the season is on 19 October from Penarth and Weston to Bristol. She has several late-season charters which keep her in commission till at least 24 October.

Dyfed County Council The CLEDDAU KING has been sold to the Department of the Environment (Northern Ireland) for the Strangford-Portaferry service. The remaining ferry, the CLEDDAU QUEEN, is still for sale.

NORTH WEST

J B Marshall, Chester, has offered his 'Chester Packet' business for sale at £10 000. The horse-drawn BETELGEUSE offered trips from the city on the Shropshire Union Canal.

Merseyside P T E The EGREMONT was damaged after springing a leak whilst laid up. She has been sold to Frederick Oldham Ltd of Liverpool who plan to resell her after drydocking her for repairs.

D Ashcroft, Preston, has sold the SHELAGH and she is expected to leave the Lancaster Canal.

Isle of Man Steam Packet Co The KING ORRY (1946) made her final sailing on 31 August, from Liverpool to Llandudno. She is now laid up at Birkenhead and is expected to be sold for scrap; her place will be taken by a new car ferry next season.

MISCELLANY

LA DAME DE SERK, laid up in London, is being offered for sale or charter by her owner, Bruce R P Parsons.

TRIP OUT

November 1975

NORTH EAST

Ashanti Cruises, York After operating for only two seasons, the firm's only vessel, the Brecon-built waterbus ASHANTI GOLD, has been offered for sale.

EAST ANGLIA

C G Brinkley, Felixstowe The ferry across the River Deben from Felixstowe Ferry to Bawdsey may be withdrawn because the RAF establishment at Bawdsey which provides most of the traffic is closing.

THAMES

Services from Westminster to Kew, Richmond and Hampton Court finished for the winter in October, but summer schedules were still being maintained between Westminster, Tower Pier and Greenwich at the beginning of November.

Greenwich Pleasure Cruises has been formed by boatbuilders Thos W Hughan & Co Ltd to operate charter trips with the PRIDE OF GREENWICH, built by Hughan at Greenwich last summer. She is similar to the 300-passenger CHEVENING which, along with the CHAY BLYTH, is owned by Hughan and chartered to George Wheeler Launches of Westminster.

Speed Hydrofoils have gone out of business following financial difficulties. The Company, through its associate Airavia Ltd of Shanklin, intended to market Russian hydrofoils overseas but seemed to have little success. The craft have been repossessed by the Russians, and the two Raketa craft have continued to run between Westminster Tower and Greenwich under the management of the Russian-owned CTC Lines. The larger KOMETA WORLD TRADER which was delivered in April is being refitted on the Thames in the hope that she can run a service on the Irish Sea next year; plans to operate her on the Clyde this year did not materialise.

Aquadine Enterprises, Wargrave 4-hour public cruises on the PINK CHAMPAGNE are being run this autumn for Sunday lunch (fare £5 including a meal aboard) and Saturday evening dinner-dances (£7).

SOUTH COAST

Red Funnel The hydrofoil SHEARWATER 2 is to be renamed NORTH OWL by her new owners, Offshore Workboats. The SHEARWATER, in service from 1969 to 1973, has also been sold - to a Portsmouth firm calling itself Biba Shipping Ltd.

Taurus Yacht Services, Boscombe The business was acquired by John W Holloway from Cutler Bros before the start of the season which finished on 28 September. Mr Holloway has formed a new company, Boscombe Taurus Yacht Services Ltd, and plans to introduce a 106-ft vessel named BOSCOMBE QUEEN on the Isle of Wight trips next season, leaving the present vessel, the ISLAND QUEEN, to run Swanage and Dorset Lakes trips.

Croson The DORSET and POOLE BELLEs finished on 2 October; the BOURNEMOUTH BELLE continued till 31 October, doing Swanage and Dorset Lakes trips. The new owner of the WESSEX BELLE is a Mr Michael Brooks of Poole.

CHANNEL ISLANDS

Isle of Sark Shipping Co Until early April, sailings are on MTWFS; there are two round trips from Guernsey on Tuesdays and alternate Saturdays (from 8 November) and one trip on the other days.

WEST OF ENGLAND

South Hams District Council Paddon and Crews (Dart Pleasure Craft) have offered to take over the Council's Dartmouth-Kingswear ferry services, and claim they will be able to reduce fares by 20% and make a profit where the Council is incurring losses. The Council is apparently considering the offer.

Isles of Scilly Steamship Co On 31 October the Department of the Environment announced that it would make a £1 million loan to the Company for a new ship - expected to cost £2 million - which is expected to replace the SCILIANIAN in 1977.

BRISTOL CHANNEL

P & A Campbell Gales in September caused the cancellation of several sailings including those on the 25th and the season's only Tenby trip on the 27th.

NORTH WEST

D Ashcroft, Preston The SHELAGH left the Lancaster Canal in mid-September and proceeded via the Leeds and Liverpool Canal and River Trent to Burton-on-Trent where she is to be used privately by her new owner.

IRISH SEA

Isle of Man Steam Packet Co The KING ORRY has been sold to R Taylor & Sons for demolition at Glasson Dock,

G Egee, Castletown (IoM) hopes to be able to run a Kometa hydrofoil (see Speed Hydrofoils item) to Douglas next season. UK ports served could apparently include Menai Bridge, Liverpool, Fleetwood and Ayr.

 © G P Hamer 4 November 1975

TRIP OUT

December 1975

THAMES

Winter services from Westminster follow a different pattern from last year. The seven boats offer separate Westminster-Tower and Westminster-Greenwich sailings every half hour until 1515 daily; this arrangement ensures that saloon vessels are always allocated to the longer Greenwich run.

The ferry from Tower Pier to HMS BELFAST is being maintained this winter by the ST GEORGE which was used throughout last summer; previously, the service was worked in turn by various boats owned by the three Tower Pier operators.

Thames Launches The winter service from Charing Cross to the Tower and Greenwich is being maintained by the HURLINGHAM, ROYAL PRINCESS and ROYALTY.

A T Woods Tower Pier, had ordered a 126 ft vessel from Southern Shipbuilders of Faversham, but only the hull was complete when the yard closed last summer. There has been no news of further work on the vessel.

CHANNEL ISLANDS

British Rail The EARL GODWIN is due to enter service next month and the CALEDONIAN PRINCESS will then be refurbished ready for the new pattern of sailings next summer.

WEST OF ENGLAND

Isles of Scilly Steamship Co The new ship has been ordered from Appledore Shipbuilders. With a length of 220 ft and a beam of 36 ft, She will carry the same number of passengers as the present SCILLONIAN - 600 - and is due for delivery in the spring of 1977.

MIDLAND WATERWAYS

Dudley Canal Trust has been operating daily charter trips through the Dudley Tunnel since 22 September using the 50-passenger electric narrow boat ELECTRA. Until then, boats were "legged" through (because of ventilation problems, internal combustion engines cannot be used in the tunnel) and this ancient art is still demonstrated to passengers.

IRISH SEA

Isle of Man Steam Packet Co The KING ORRY left the Mersey under tow on 4 November for breaking up at Glasson Dock. The Company's new car ferry was due to be launched on 4 December as the LADY OF MANN, reviving the name of the steamer built in 1930 and withdrawn in 1971.

MISCELLANY

The former Red Funnel hydrofoil SHEARWATER 2 has had her foils removed and is now credited with a speed of 15 knots; renamed NORTH OWL, she can carry 66 passengers.

The former Leeds and Liverpool Canal "short boat" SHELAGH, used for passenger trips on the Lancaster Canal from 1972 until last September, has been offered for sale by her new Burton-on-Trent owner; she can carry 100 passengers.

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TRIP OUT

January 1976

THAMES

Tideway Passenger Boat Co, Westminster The TAMAR BELLE, bought last spring but apparently not used, was sold to H & B P Wood (Sherwood Line) of Nottingham last autumn.

D G Moore, Westminster The 45-ft MARY LOUISE (ex BEAULIEU BELLE) has been offered for sale for £3500 after only two years on the Thames,

Kennet and Avon Canal Trust After receiving a certificate for 44 passengers, the steamboat LEVIATHAN ran short trips from Wootton Rivers, Wilts, at weekends in August and September. This year she will run from Easter to the end of September. The Reading Branch of the Trust plans to form a company to run a new 45-ft 56-passenger vessel.

Misc The ps TATTERSHALL CASTLE left Immingham on 11 December, after a stay there of over two years, and was towed to Greenhithe by the Humber tug LADY ALMA. On 17 December she was moved up river to be berthed off the Victoria Embankment above Charing Cross Bridge, immediately upstream of the HISPANIOLA (ex MAID OF ASHTON). She has a white hull whilst funnel and deck fittings are painted yellow and brown. Access will be via a footbridge but the work had not been completed by the end of the year.

SOUTH COAST

Red Funnel The COWES CASTLE returned from Rotterdam in mid-December after rebuilding and then went to Northam where Vosper Thornycroft are to complete the interior.

M Brooks, Poole, is offering 1¼-hour lunch cruises from Poole Quay every Wednesday in the WESSEX BELLE at an inclusive fare of £3,50. Mr Brooks, whose main business appears to be the hire of rubbish skips, bought the vessel from Croson in 1973 and has since fitted a large deck saloon.

R H Wills and Son, Weymouth The firm's only vessel, the 117-passenger NEW BRITANNIC, is for sale. Built in 1930, she came to Weymouth in 1971 having spent the rest of her life at Ramsgate - she took part in the Dunkerque evacuation in 1940.

CHANNEL ISLANDS

British Rail The entry into service of the EARL GODWIN has been delayed till February. When the CALEDONIAN PRINCESS goes for overhaul, extra seating will be fitted, some cabins removed and a more powerful bow thrust unit installed.

Condor may have a fourth hydrofoil next season; sailings start on 1 March.

Vedettes Blanches, St-Malo A 140-passenger catamaran is due to run with the BELLE DE JERSEY next season.

Cie Côte des Iles, Portbail The CÔTE DES ILES, laid up last summer, has been sold to Flotta Shipping Ltd and left Portbail on 7 November for Greenock; she is to be used in connection with the contractors Richard Costain. The 80-passenger vessel was built in 1970 as the DE POINTIS for service at Nantes and was renamed when she began running to Jersey in 1973 (previous reports that she was new in 1973 were incorrect).

BRISTOL CHANNEL

P & A Campbell The BALMORAL will run at Easter, with a trip from Penarth and Weston to Ilfracombe on the Sunday and Swansea sailings on other days. Summer sailings will be similar to last year's but with slightly more from Penarth and Weston. Coupon books, giving £4 of travel for £3, are available till the end of this month.

Dyfed County Council The CLEDDAU KING is being renamed PORTAFERRY by her new owners, the Department of the Environment (Northern Ireland).

IRISH SEA

Isle of Man Steam Packet Co Liverpool to Llandudno day trips next season will be on Tuesdays from 29 June to 24 August (except 13 July and 3 August), and on Thursdays and Sundays from 6 June to 5 September (except Sun 13 June). Fares to the Isle of Man have been increased and the fare from any port is now £6.40 single or £3.60 day return.

MISCELLANY

At the beginning of January both the MIDLAND, formerly at Torquay, and LA DAME DE SERK were still in St Katharine's Dock, London. The latter was on offer for sale for £35 000, possibly for conversion to a yacht.

www.trip-out.co.uk © G P Hamer 5 January 1976

TRIP OUT

February 1976

NORTH EAST

British Rail A one-ship service has been operating on the Humber for the ships' overhauls. The FARRINGFORD was due to be off service from 5 January, followed by the LINCOLN CASTLE from 20 January to 7 February. The Humber Paddle Steamer Group has arranged charters in the LINCOLN CASTLE to Goole on 23 May and to Grimsby on 5 September. It is also hoped to take her to Goole on 18 July for the celebrations of the port's 150th anniversary.

Bosun's Line, York Following the sale of the BOSUN'S JANE and 'SUE last year, the remaining vessel, the WATER PRINCE, has also been disposed of - to Apollo Canal Carriers.

Apollo Canal Carriers (D Lowe), Shipley, will be using the newly acquired WATER PRINCE for year-round charter work on the Leeds and Liverpool Canal. She will run with the converted narrow boat APOLLO, but the ACHILLES, built in 1973, has been sold.

Calder Navigation Society has decided to sell the DOREEN. Acquired from the Bowness Bay Boating Co in 1966, she has carried out a variety of duties on the Calder & Hebble Navigation and adjacent waterways, carrying up to 20 passengers. The purchase of another vessel is being considered.

EAST ANGLIA

G W Searle Hunstanton The 45-passenger SEA LION has been offered for sale; she has run trips from Hunstanton since 1970.

THAMES

A T Woods, Tower Pier The 99-passenger DOLPHIN, withdrawn after the 1974 season, has gone to Thorne in Yorkshire where she is being converted into a private cruiser.

Salter Bros Public sailings next season run from 23 May to 12 September (one week longer than last season) and follow a similar pattern to last year's, covering the Oxford-Abingdon, Reading-Henley and Marlow-Windsor-Staines sections of the river. Fares have been increased by around 20%.

Discover Galapagos, Faversham, have ceased operating. The GOLDEN CORMORANT was sold last autumn and has returned to her original home of Dartmouth after only two seasons running on the Medway and Swale from Strood and Faversham.

SOUTH COAST

Isle of Wight County Council A new Cowes floating bridge, built at East Cowes, was delivered in January. The old NO.3 ferry, built in 1936, is being sold.

M Brooks, Poole The WESSEX BELLE is limited to 12 passengers; amongst other trips, she is being advertised for clay pigeon shooting cruises.

Misc The BALMORAL is being chartered by the Coastal Cruising Association on 10 April for a cruise from Bournemouth, Yarmouth and Portsmouth round the Isle of Wight, the first such trip since 1971.

CHANNEL ISLANDS

Vedettes Blanches, St-Malo, are believed to have purchased the Norwegian KARMSUND (1972, 195 grt) for Jersey sailings. She was one of several similar fast catamarans in service around the Norwegian coast.

WEST OF ENGLAND

Dart Pleasure Craft have bought the GOLDEN CORMORANT from Faversham. Built as the BERRY CASTLE, she ran for the River Dart Steamboat Co until 1971. Her return, together with the purchase of the QUEEN BOADICEA II last summer, gives the firm (run by Messrs Paddon & Crews) a fleet of four vessels, three of which are saloon boats.

G T Wickham, Plymouth, operated the 54-passenger dual purpose trawler/excursion vessel PETER DAVID, built by the Bideford Shipyard in 1973. She is believed to have been laid up last summer and is being offered for sale for £16 500.

A J G England, Fadstow The 92-passemer. GOLDEN MARIANA, similar to the smaller PETER DAVID of Plymouth, was sold last year after operating at Padstow for only two years. She went to M MacKenzie of Ullapool, but is now on the market again.

BRISTOL CHANNEL

P & A Campbell The BALMORAL has spent the winter at Dartmouth. After her charter round the Isle of Wight on 10 April, she returns to the Bristol Channel, carrying passengers on 13 April from Penzance to Swansea (passengers travel out to Penzance by coach from Bristol and the round trip as being offered at an inclusive fare of £18). The BALMORAL has a charter from Weston to Ilfracombe and Lundy on 1 May arranged for the Mission to Seamen.

NORTH WEST

Merseyside PTE The Liverpool landing stage, built only last year, sank in the gales on 3 January. Services were suspended until 12 January when the ferries began using the Isle of Man steamers' stage. Work on salvaging the ferry pontoon has started.

Co-op Travel is again chartering a vessel - presumably the ROYAL DAFFODIL - for Manchester Ship Canal cruises on six weekends, 29-30 May, 26-27 June, 17-18 July, 14-15 August, 11-12 and 25-26 September; the Saturday sailings are from Liverpool to Manchester, with a trip in the opposite direction on Sundays. Fares have been substantially increased to £3.10 single, or £4.25 for a rail/boat round trip.

IRISH SEA

Isle of Man Steam Packet Co The MONA'S QUEEN sailed up the Manchester Ship Canal on 9 January to begin her overhaul in Manchester. The KING ORRY, awaiting demolition at Glasson Dock, broke her moorings in the gales on 3 January and grounded on a sandbank in the River Lune. Her owners are seeking tenders for refloating her.

MISCELLANY

After being laid up at Chatham for a few months in 1974/75, the ex-Norwegian passenger/cargo ship MELANDDROTT (1948, 229 grt) was converted into a floating restaurant at Maryport in Cumbria where she is advertised as the 'Ferry Boat Inn'.

TRIP OUT

March 1976

NORTH EAST

The former Tyne ferry NORTHUMBRIAN, in use as a floating restaurant at Gateshead since 1973, has closed owing, apparently, to a lack of business.

THAMES

Tideway Passenger Boat Co, Westminster The 125-passenger TIDEWAY VENTURE, which entered service last September, has been offered for sale for £41 000. She is being used on the winter Westminster-Greenwich service.

R J Maynard, Westminster The TWICKENHAM, a 76-passenger open boat used for 45-minute cruises, has been advertised for sale for £1000.

Matthews & Son The cruising restaurant FATHER THAMES has been out of service for a year. She spent last summer at Cadogan Pier, Chelsea, but was subsequently moved to a mooring in the river above Battersea Bridge.

Turk & Harwood, Kingston A new saloon vessel, to carry up to 110 passengers, is due to be delivered in June.

Guildford Boat House (River Wey) Next season the 80-seat ALFRED LEROY, built last year, will operate the Godalming-Guildford service, leaving Godalming at 1500 on Saturdays, and at 1100 and 1600 on other days; from Sundays to Fridays there is a trip from Guildford at 1400 but the evening trip from Guildford to Godalming is usually reserved for parties. The electric launch THE PILGRIM continues on short afternoon cruises from Guildford but the HARRY STEVENS appears to have been sold.

SOUTH COAST

Apparently owing to the poor condition of Yarmouth Pier, the BALMORAL will call at Cowes instead on the CCA round-the-island charter on 10 April.

CHANNEL ISLANDS

British Rail The maiden voyage of the EARL GODWIN was on 2 February from the Islands to Weymouth. The CALEDONIAN PRINCESS then went to Immingham for her refit.

WEST OF ENGLAND

J L Baugh, Paignton The CORAL STAR III has been sold to F Newton of Cromarty after only three seasons in Torbay. Built in 1948 as the POOLE BELLE, she joins her sister the SOUTERS LASS (originally the BOURNEMOUTH BELLE, later the WEYMOUTH BELLE) which has run on Newton's Cromarty-Nigg ferry service for the past year.

Dart Pleasure Craft The GOLDEN CORMORANT is being renamed TOTNES CASTLE, reviving the name of a paddle steamer in service with the River Dart Steamboat Co from 1923 to 1963. The two remaining vessels of the Steamboat Co, the CARDIFF and CONWAY CASTLEs, are still on the market.

Isles of Scilly Steamship Co Daily (except Sunday) sailings operate from 12 April to 11October at 0930 from Penzance and 1630 from St Mary's; on Saturdays from 22 May to 4 September this schedule is replaced by a double round trip (0615 and 1330 from Penzance). The fare is now £5 single or day return.

BRISTOL CHANNEL

Lundy Company The LUNDY GANNET was sold in January and is now at Port Talbot. The Ilfracombe-Lundy service will be maintained by the POLAR BEAR alone; both vessels are limited to carrying 12 passengers.

P & A Campbell Early season charters open to the public include a cruise from Penarth and Weston to Bristol and the River Severn on 24 April, a day trip from Weston to Ilfracombe and Lundy on 1 May (both trips for the Missions to Seamen), another Weston-Ilfracombe-Lundy trip on 15 May (Bristol Sea Scouts) and a direct Swansea-Lundy trip on 23 May (National Trust). Fares on ordinary sailings have been increased and a day return to Ilfracombe will be £3.70 from Swansea and £3.90 from Penarth or Weston; a day return to Lundy is £3.90 from Ilfracombe or £4.50 from Penarth, Weston or Swansea. The annual Isles of Scilly weekend trip will be on 8-11 October.

Dundas Carrying Co, Bath A new 72-passenger paddle vessel is being built at Box in the garden of the owner, Lt-Cdr Wray-Bliss.

MIDLAND WATERWAYS

Warwickshire Fly Boat Co, Coventry The 49-seat narrow boat LANCING has been offered for sale after only one season with these owners.

NORTH WEST

Merseyside PTE The sunken Liverpool landing stage was raised on 18 February and is now under repair.

The ROYAL IRIS was due to return to service on 2 March after an overhaul prolonged to 10 weeks by an engine room fire.

IRISH SEA

Isle of Man Steam Packet Co Last year the total number of day trippers taken to the Island was 139 000 - the best figure for twenty years,

MISCELLANY

The former Red Funnel vessel MEDINA, which has been at the Lymington Yacht Haven since May 1974, has been sold for use as a floating restaurant at Ramsgate. During her delivery voyage under tow on 25/26 February she was involved in a collision with an unknown vessel off Dungeness and suffered bow damage.

Amongst special trains being arranged by the LNER Society is one from London and Birmingham to Penzance for a day trip to the Isles of Scilly on 15 May; fare £12 inclusive.

An interesting article in the March issue of 'Waterways World' describes the various passenger boats that have operated on the Kennet & Avon Canal since the last war.

www.trip-out.co.uk © G P Hamer 1 March 1976

TRIP OUT

April 1976

Scottish news is normally outside the scope of 'Trip Out', but readers will, I am sure, be pleased to hear that the ps WAVERLEY will be in service again on the Firth of Clyde this season, despite Strathclyde Regional Council's decision to give its annual grant to the turbine steamer QUEEN MARY II (which is being renamed QUEEN MARY). It does seem absurd, though, that two out of only three Class III excursion ships in the UK (the other is the BALMORAL) should be competing with one another in this way, when so many areas are without any sizeable sea-going vessels.

Geoffrey Hamer

NORTH EAST

British Rail The Humber Paddle Steamer Group's first charter of 1976 takes the LINCOLN CASTLE to Goole on 23 May. For the 150th anniversary of the port of Goole on 18 July, the HPSG is doing an upriver Hull-Goole sailing and the downriver trip will be a joint Coastal Cruising Association/Wirral Railway Circle charter with a connecting train from Liverpool. Other charters are planned for 22 August (Paddle Steamer Preservation Society, to the River Trent) and 5 September (HPSG, to Grimsby).

THAMES

British Rail want to be relieved of their statutory obligation to maintain the Tilbury-Gravesend ferry which has been losing money for some years.

R G (Passenger Launches), Erith The catamaran CAROUSEL built in Guernsey in 1974, was renamed TWIN-STAR when registered in December - presumably the name CAROUSEL was not available.

C T C Lines The hydrofoil service was expected to resume on 7 April after a break of at least a fortnight, apparently for maintenance. The firm has taken over the offices of the defunct London Hoverservices at Greenland Dock Entrance.

Tattershall Castle Trust The ps TATTERSHALL CASTLE opened as an art gallery on 24 February and is now open daily (except Mondays); the admission charge is 20p. The Trust would like to charter the PSPS steamer KINGSWEAR CASTLE and, after rebuilding her, would run trips on the Thames from the TATTERSHALL CASTLE.

Tideway Passenger Boat Co, Westminster The firm's last wooden vessel, the 99-passenger SKYLARK X, has been sold to the F & B Boat Co, leaving only the modern vessels TIDEWAY and TIDEWAY VENTURE.

Turk & Harwood, Kingston The new 110-passenger vessel is named KINGSTON ROYALE and is now being fitted out at Kingston.

F & B Boat Co, Walton The fleet, based at Surbiton in winter, now consists of four vessels - THE MONARCH I, RICHMOND GEM, SKYLARK X and VIKING M. Short public trips are offered in summer from Walton-on-Thames.

SOUTH COAST

British Rail Hovercraft (Seaspeed) The Southampton-Cowes service is to be withdrawn; the two SRN6 craft apparently incur an annual loss of £130 000.

Red Funnel The lengthening of the COWES CASTLE, which returned to service at the end of 1975, increased her gross tonnage from 786 to 912. Only three ships are needed for this summer's service, but the vessels' increased capacity and shorter turn-rounds (made possible by 'drive-through' loading) more than compensate for the reduction. The OSBORNE CASTLE is to be sold.
United Motor Boats, Christchurch, have threatened to withdraw their Tuckton Bridge to Mudeford Beach service unless licence fees paid to Christchurch Council are reduced.
Boscombe Taurus Yacht Services The mooring dolphin at Boscombe Pier was swept away by gales in January and there are doubts as to whether the service can operate this year.
Croson The BOURNEMOUTH BELLE was slipped at Bolson's yard on 8 March, followed by the DORSET BELLE on the 17th.

CHANNEL ISLANDS

British Rail The EARL GODWIN was delayed by mechanical trouble on 5 and 16 March; after further generator trouble on 23 March, she was replaced by the SARNIA, while the NORMANNIA was sent from lay-up at Newhaven to maintain the car ferry service from 26 March.
Condor The CONDOR 4 opened the season on 1 March and was joined by the CONDOR 3 on the 12th. The latter was off service with mechanical trouble from 20 to 28 March when the CONDOR 4 offered a shuttle service between St-Malo and Jersey.
Vedettes Blanches St-Malo The catamaran BELLE DE DINARD entered service on 21 March, but broke down on the following day and was replaced by the BELLE DE JERSEY. During the summer, the BELLE DE JERSEY will run *from* Granville, while the BELLE DE DINARD will make up to three round trips a day from St-Malo, taking only 5 minutes longer than the Condor hydrofoils.
Vedettes Armoricaines The KEVRENN is due to resume the Granville service on 12 April but will be replaced later by the new 350-passenger BRITTANIA; the new ship will make two round trips daily in the peak season, taking 1½ hours for the crossing to Jersey.
Cie Côte des Iles, Portbail The CÔTE DES ILES has been renamed FLOTTA by her new Scottish owners.

MIDLAND WATERWAYS

The narrow boat BARLEYCORN, seemingly used as a floating bar at Braunston despite having a certificate for 37 passengers, is to be sold by auction on 10 April.

MISCELLANY

The paddle tug JOHN H AMOS, laid up on the Tees for the past eight years, has been bought by the Medway Maritime Museum for £3500 and was towed south to Chatham by the steam tug CERVIA in March. In service, she had a Class V certificate for 144 passengers.

The Greek Carras Line's DAPHNE is making a round-Britain cruise in August, calling at Hull, Leith, Iona, Galway, Cobh, Dublin, Holyhead, Avonmouth, Falmouth and Southampton.

 © G P Hamer 5 April 1976

TRIP OUT

May 1976

Perhaps the most significant development to report this month is the start of a daily excursion service on the Thames estuary - the first daily service to Southend for some ten years. I hope to have more details next month.

Geoffrey Hamer

NORTH EAST

Tyne & Wear PTE The new 300-passenger ferry being built at Pembroke Dock *is* due to be launched soon.

British Rail (Humber) Besides the HPSG charters mentioned in the last issue, the LINCOLN CASTLE is being chartered by at least three railway enthusiasts' bodies: on 27 June with a train from Leicester; on 4 July from London; on 18 July from Liverpool. The first two are cruises from New Holland and the third is a Goole-Hull sailing, the outward Hull-Goole trip being an HPSG charter.

THAMES

British Rail New plans to reduce losses on the Tilbury-Gravesend ferry include the sale of one vessel (a vessel would be chartered when needed), a reduction in the frequency and hours of operation, and fare collection on board instead of at Gravesend.

Mobird Trading Co, Gravesend, is operating the CAPTAIN JAMES COOK, built last year at Middlesbrough. On 1 May she began a daily trip to Southend, leaving Gravesend at 1000 and arriving back at 1945. The return fare is £2.25 and places should be reserved by telephone.

J P T Coakley, Tower Pier The VAROS is being chartered by the Thames Ship Society on 20 June for a day trip from Tower Pier, Greenwich and Tilbury to Southend.

CTC Lines The H S RAKETA THAMES is at present running the service alone; as well as Greenwich-Tower-Westminster trips, on Mondays to Fridays there is a 'commuter' trip from Gravesend.

R J Maynard, Westminster The COCKNEY SPARROW, a sister of the Tideway Co's TIDEWAY VENTURE, was completed by Impala Marine (Thames Launch Works) at Twickenham in March. She replaces the TWICKENHAM on the 45-minute cruises from Westminster which resumed at Easter.

G H F Parr, Kingston The MERRIE THAMES, built on a fibreglass hull acquired some three years ago, has entered service from Richmond.

Arthur Jacobs, Windsor The WINDSOR SOVEREIGN, a 150-passenger vessel built by Jacobs at Windsor, was named by Princess Margaret on 14 April, and was in service with the other six vessels of the fleet at Easter. The WINDSOR TWO, a 65-passenger open boat, has been sold for service at Hampton Court. Normal trips are to Boveney Lock (35 minutes for 40p) or to Bray Lock (2 hours for £1).

Lee Valley Regional Park Authority A new vessel named PRIDE OF LEE has entered service at Broxbourne.

SOUTH COAST

British Rail Hovercraft The Southampton-Cowes service was handed over to the British Hovercraft Corporation on 1May.

Croson The POOLE BELLE was slipped at Poole on 23 March.

R A Hale, Poole The WATER GYPSY, used for angling trips last winter, resumed Poole-Brownsea trips on 1 April.

Others The BAIMORAL took over 500 passengers round the Isle of Wight on charter on 10 April in calm weather. She then sailed to Plymouth for an evening charter on the 11th before returning to the Bristol Channel.

CHANNEL ISLANDS

British Rail A labour dispute aboard the EARL GODWIN at Weymouth on 27 April caused the cancellation of her sailing. Services were resumed on the following day.

Condor An RHS160 hydrofoil, larger than the present craft and capable of carrying 180 passengers at 36 knots, has been ordered from the Navaltecnica yard at Messina at a cost of £1 million, and is due to be delivered this month.

WEST OF ENGLAND

S G Webber, Brixham THE DART'S DELIGHT has been sold to John Baugh of Paignton. A 58-passenger open boat built in 1962 for Dart trips, She operated a Torquay-Brixham ferry service in recent years.

J L Baugh, Paignton THE DART'S DELIGHT is to replace the CORAL STAR III and is being renamed CORAL STAR IV.

BRISTOL CHANNEL

P & A Campbell The BALMORAL has a variety of trips in the first three weeks of May with a number of charters, and public trips from Penarth, Weston and Ilfracombe. Regular Swansea sailings resume on 22 May and follow the usual mid-week pattern, the destination after Ilfracombe being Lynmouth and Porlock Bay on Wednesdays and Lundy on Tuesdays and Thursdays. Sailings on other days are divided between Swansea and up-channel ports; Penarth and Weston sailings until the end of June are on 28-30 May, 4, 11-14, 18-19 and 27-28 June. One other sailing of note is on 25 June from Swansea and Ilfracombe to Clovelly and a cruise past Bude.

MIDLAND WATERWAYS

Willow Wren Besides the WATER OUZEL, used for charters and public trips from Rugby and Braunston, trips are being introduced this year at Middlewich, Cheshire, using the ASTEROPE, a one-time Grand Union narrow boat built in 1935 and acquired from M E Braine in 1974. She has been refitted to carry 50 passengers.

IRISH SEA

Isle of Man Steam Packet Co The MONA'S QUEEN left the Manchester Ship Canal on 9 April after a stay of three months for refit. The KING ORRY was refloated in mid-April and returned to Glasson Dock where she is to be broken up.

TRIP OUT

June 1976

NORTH EAST

British Rail The LINCOLN CASTLE took 500 passengers to Goole on charter to the HPSG on 23 May.

THAMES

Because of the drought, the river is now very shallow between Hammersmith and Richmond at low tide, and groundings and delays have become common.

Mobird Trading Co, Gravesend The CAPTAIN JAMES COOK started as scheduled on 1 May and, besides the day trip from Gravesend, she makes short cruises in the estuary from Southend Pier during the afternoon. She has Class V and VI Certificates for 100 passengers - not very many for a vessel of her size.

British Rail Closure of the Tilbury-Gravesend ferry has been refused by parliament and the plans for economies have been abandoned. BR intends to persuade Kent and Essex County Councils to resume paying a subsidy for the service.

Catamaran Cruisers Twice daily public trips from Greenwich to the PRINCESS ELIZABETH (at London Bridge) and Lambeth Pier are being advertised - in recent years the only public sailings have been occasional Sunday trips to Kew.

R K Baker, Tower Pier The ST GEORGE has been replaced on the BELFAST ferry by the 110-passenger BRUNEL.

Thames Launches The BRUNEL, built at the owners' Twickenham yard in 1969, has been sold to R K Baker. The KINGWOOD's saloon was gutted by a fire last winter, but she is being rebuilt.

Kennet & Avon Canal Trust The Reading Branch of the Trust is this season operating the NAUTILUS between Reading and Padworth Bridge, near Aldermaston. Built in 1928 for the canal carriers Fellows, Morton & Clayton, she is owned by Mr Rod Atkin.

SOUTH COAST

Croson The DORSET BELLE opened the season with a charter on 11 May and started public trips on the 12th, being followed into service by the BOURNEMOUTH BELLE on the 27th and the POOLE BELLE on 1 June. Sailings are similar to last year's but fares have gone up - Bournemouth-Yarmouth is now £2.80 return. A new vessel similar to the BOURNEMOUTH BELLE but larger, carrying 250 passengers (the maximum on a Class VI Certificate) is to be built for the Isle of Wight service next year, and the BOURNEMOUTH BELLE will replace the POOLE BELLE which is now in her last season at Bournemouth. Thus Croson will have replaced its entire fleet in three years at a cost of about £250 000.

Boscombe Taurus Yacht Services The mooring dolphin lost in the January gales is not to be replaced at present, so plans to run a larger vessel have been shelved.

CHANNEL ISLANDS

British Rail The CALEDONIAN PRINCESS returned to service on 12 May - two days late, her place having been taken on the 10th and 11th by the NORMANNIA and SARNIA. Following her refit, she is a one-class ship and has seats for 1050 passengers.

Condor The new CONDOR 5 reached Guernsey on 28 May and was due to replace the CONDOR 1 in service in early June.

Vedettes Armoricaines The BRITTANIA (sic) was delivered late and was due to take over the Granville-Jersey service on 5 June.

Vedettes Blanches, St-Malo The catamaran BELLE DE DINARD returned to service on 13 May; she was built in 1972 as the KARMSUND for the Norwegian operator Haugesunds D/S and carries 140 passengers at 28 knots. The BELLE DE JERSEY runs from St-Malo to Jersey on about 15 days a month, spending the rest of her time on Granville-Jersey trips.

WEST OF ENGLAND

G H Ridalls & Son, Dartmouth, have acquired the 110-passenger QUEEN OF HELFORD from J P Hodgson, Falmouth.

Tony Soper, Dartmouth The SCOMBER (originally the SEYMOUR CASTLE of the River Dart Steamboat Co) will be offering 2½-hour birdwatching cruises from Dartmouth from 2 June to 30 September, leaving at 1000 on WThF and at 1430 on WThFSu. Fare £1.50.

Millbrook Steamboat & Trading Co The LADY ELIZABETH, smallest member of the fleet, has been sold and another vessel is on the market. The range of trips on offer has not been reduced.

B Curtin, Plymouth, has bought the LADY ELIZABETH and is using her for a service from Plymouth (Mayflower Steps) to Drake's Island. Mr Curtin's other vessel, the QUEEN OF THE SEA, continues to do Dockyard cruises from the Hoe (Febbleside Beach), but he also plans to do trips to Calstock, previously the preserve of the Millbrook boats.

St Mary's Boatmen's Association One of the Association's members, F C Thompson, has sold his vessel, the KINGSLEY, to S Jones of Falmouth; her replacement has been named KINGSLEY II.

BRISTOL CHANNEL

P & A Campbell Sailings fram Penarth and Weston next month are on 3-4, 11-12, 16-19 and 30-31 July to Ilfracombe and on 26 July to Mumbles.

MISCELLANY

The steamer YARMOUTH of 1895, which operated at Great Yarmouth till 1967, was lifted into position on land alongside St Katharine's Dock, London, on 14 May. She is to be a steam museum.

 © G P Hamer 8 June 1976

TRIP OUT

July 1976

EAST ANGLIA

Yarmouth & Gorleston Steamboat Co A new 100-passenger catamaran waterbus named BROADLAND BELLE was delivered by Contour Craft of Wroxham on 25 June. Similar in design to the SWIFTSURE of Beaulieu, she will be used for Broads cruises from Yarmouth. The NORWICH BELLE has been advertised for sale lately, but continues on sea trips from Yarmouth, leaving the Town Hall Quay at 1030 and 1445.

Pleasure Steamers, Great Yarmouth The *ss* QUEEN OF THE BROADS is running her usual sailings to Oulton Broad (Mon and Fri), Horning (Tue and Thu), Reedham (Wed and Sun afternoons) and 2-hour cruises (Wed mornings). The Horning trip is replaced by an excursion to Beccles 3-4 times a season when high tides prevent her from passing under the bridges over the River Bure. The ELIZABETH SIMPSON offers a day trip to Reedham and St Olaves on Wednesdays and short trips to Berney Arms on other days.

Peterborough City Council The 45-passenger ROYAL SCOT is being offered for sale for £2995.

THAMES

Meridian Line Cruises Greenwich-Southend day trips are scheduled for 4 and 18 August; advance booking is recommended.

SOUTH COAST

Red Funnel Staff of the subsidiary Cosens & Co Ltd of Weymouth were taken for a cruise in the Solent from Southampton aboard the tug/tender CALSHOT in June to mark Cosens' centenary.

Boscombe Taurus Yacht Services The ISLAND QUEEN commenced on 30 May on an identical schedule to previous years'.

CHANNEL ISLANDS

British Rail The SARNIA made her first Weymouth-Guernsey day trip on 2 June with 1100 passengers. BR intends to replace the SARNIA with a ro/ro vessel which would run from Portsmouth.

Condor The CONDOR 5 entered service on 2 June. The CONDOR 1 left Guernsey on 4 June for Messina and is to operate a service in the Mediterranean.

Vedettes Armoricaines The KEVRENN made her final Jersey sailing on 4 June and now runs at Brest. The BRITTANIA entered service on the 5th; measuring 225 grt, she carries 340 passengers at 18 knots, taking 1½ hours for the Granville-Jersey sailing.

WEST OF ENGLAND

M D Barrow, Torquay/Exmouth Sailings from Exmouth by the DEVON PRINCESS began on 30 May and run daily except on Saturdays at 1115 to Torquay (1230 - 1715), due back at 1840. The vessel makes an afternoon cruise from Torquay to the River Dart and there is also a]-hour evening cruise from Exmouth at 2000. The PRIDE OF THE BAY normally runs from Torquay to Brixham or the River Dart.

J S Thompson, Torquay, trading as 'Torbay Seaways', is operating the TORBAY CLIPPER, formerly the Devon Dock, Pier & Steamship Co's EXONIA, from Torquay (Beacon Quay) to Brixham.

Kenneth Cooper Torquay, who ran the KILORAN II and then the MIDLAND at Torquay until 1974, died in mid-June after being involved in a light aircraft crash.

South Hams District Council decided on 1 July to withdraw the passenger ferries ADRIAN GILBERT and HUMPHREY GILBERT this autumn. One of the car ferries will be fitted with a passenger shelter, reducing its vehicle capacity, but the Council wants to pass the financial burden of running the car ferry service to Devon County Council.

Dart Pleasure Craft are running four saloon vessels this season - the DARTMOUTH CASTLE, QUEEN BOADICEA, QUEEN BOADICEA II and TOTNES CASTLE. The smaller DUCHESS OF YORK appears to have been withdrawn.

Milibrook Steamboat & Trading Co The DARTMOUTH CASTLE, bought from the River Dart Steamboat Co last year, has been sold to Dart Pleasure Craft; it is not clear whether she made any sailings at Plymouth in her short stay there.

BRISTOL CHANNEL

B & M Charters (Brecon & Abergavenny Canal) The SARAH SIDDONS, a paddle steamer which pushes a 46-seat barge, has entered service at Brecon.

NORTH WEST

Wyre Borough Council The WYRE LADY has been sold for service on the Severn after four years at Fleetwood. Originally the Caledonian S P Co's ASHTON, her sistership is the PRIDE OF THE BAY of Torquay. The VIKING 66 remains on the Fleetwood - Knott End ferry.

IRISH SEA

Isle of Man Steam Packet Co The LADY OF MANN was delivered from Troon on 29 June and made her first sailings between Douglas and Liverpool on the 30th.

MISCELLANY

The former Mersey ferry EGREMONT (1952), laid up at Birkenhead for over a year, has been sold by Frederick Oldham Ltd to the Island Cruising Club of Salcombe for use as a headquarters. She was towed south by the tug SEA BRISTOLIAN, arriving at Salcombe on 18 June.

The former Norwegian vessel MIDLAND which ran cruises from Torquay in 1973 and 1974, has been bought by the British Safety Council from Mr Syad M All who took her to London last year. She is to be renamed ST LUCY and will presumably fulfil a similar function to the former steam yacht ST KATHARINE which is used as a lecture centre in St Katharine's Dock, London.

To improve cruising facilities on the Humber and adjoining waterways, the Humber Paddle Steamer Group proposes to set up a company in which the public could buy shares.

TRIP OUT

August 1976

Whilst the exceptionally fine weather this summer has brought increased trade to most excursion operators, the drought has caused problems on inland waterways. Most rivers are very low and restrictions have been placed on the use of many lengths of canal. Readers planning inland trips are advised to confirm details of sailings before travelling.

Geoffrey Hamer

NORTH EAST

British Rail(Humber) Charters of the LINCOLN CASTLE in the next month are on 22 August up the River Trent and on 5 September to Grimsby. Cruises are being advertised by BR in the LINCOLN CASTLE on 8 August from Grimsby to Hull and New Holland (the outward New Holland to Grimsby sailing is a charter by a railway society), and on 28 August, an evening cruise from Hull. The FARRINGFORD *is* scheduled to make an afternoon Humber Bridge cruise on 2 October. Details of these trips can be obtained from BR at Hull Corporation Pier. Mainly because of these efforts by BR, the Humber Paddle Steamer Group is considering whether it can continue organising cruises and may not run any more after the Grimsby trip on 5 September.

Calder Navigation Society Last winter's decision to sell the DOREEN was reversed and she is instead to undergo a restoration spread over 12-18 months before returning to service.

EAST ANGLIA

Pleasure Steamers, Great Yarmouth The PSPS is chartering the QUEEN OF THE BROADS on 4 September for a cruise up the River Bure with a coach connection from London.

THAMES

The seaward end of Southend Pier was gutted by *fire* on the evening of 29 July and trips from Gravesend by the CAPTAIN JAMES COOK have been suspended until alternative arrangements can be made; the SWANAGE QUEEN was also due to call there this month on public trips from Greenwich.

Alfred Crouch & Co, Westminster The business has been taken over by George Wheeler Launches. Kew sailings are no longer operated, the LONDON BELLE sailing to Greenwich and the THAMES QUEEN to the Tower, while the PRINCESS MARINA appears to have been sold.

H Hastings, Kingston The BAY QUEEN is being used this year for cruises from Richmond to Teddington, competing with the established trips of Fenton and Parr. She berths overnight at Kingston and a single trip there from Richmond is offered in the evening.

SOUTH EAST

B D Ebsworth, Dover The PRIDE OF TEIGN has been sold to *a* Mr T Berry of Deal, and is being used for fishing trips from Dover, carrying up to 12 anglers.

SOUTH COAST

Boscombe Taurus Yacht Services The vessel intended to become the BOSCOMBE QUEEN is the BREARLEY, a 107-ft former minesweeper completed at Cowes in 1954. Now registered with a gross tonnage of 163, she is at a Poole yard but conversion and entry into service are dependent upon the building of a mooring dolphin at Boscombe Pier. Bournemouth Council has given permission for the firm to build one, but finance is apparently a problem.

WEST OF ENGLAND

A Stuart Exmouth The SOUTHAMPTON STAR, acquired early last year, was sold within six months and may not have run at Exmouth. Mr Stuart runs the 52-passenger SEA CREST on trips from the beach.

C J Woodford Torquay, runs the SOUTHAMPTON STAR on trips to Brixham.

J S Thompson, Torquay The TORBAY CLIPPER (see last issue) may not have been the EXONIA for a vessel of that name still runs at Exmouth - clarification would be appreciated.

Dart Pleasure Craft want to take over the Dartmouth-Kingswear passenger ferry which is due to close this autumn. They are also interested in the car ferry service which the South Hams Council finds unprofitable.

BRISTOL CHANNEL

P & A Campbell Sailings from Penarth and Weston until mid-Sept. are on 9, 13-16, 27-29 August and 10-13 September. Cruises from Swansea, Ilfracombe and Clovelly "towards Tintagel" are scheduled for 20 August and 3 September. The Swansea-Tenby-Lundy trip (the season's only Tenby call) will be on 28 September.

S M Crockford Tenby To replace the TENBY QUEEN, the 100-passenger VIKING SAGA as been acquired (or chartered) from Arrochar; she had-spent only two years on the Clyde, having run originally from Clacton. The fate of the 134-passenger TENBY QUEEN is not known.

MIDLAND WATERWAYS

K Rock & L Holder have formed the Holt Fleet Passenger Boat Co Ltd to run the WYRE LADY on the River Severn. There is a public day trip from Holt Fleet to Worcester on Saturdays and short cruises are usually run on Sunday afternoons, but she is otherwise engaged in charter work.

T & D Murrell, Uxbridge, are running trips on the Grand Union Canal with the STAMFORD, a Grand Union narrow boat built in 1936 and still used for cargo carrying in winter.

Erewash Travel Services are no longer operating boat trips. The 54-passenger EREWASH PRINCESS has been sold for service on the River Wye from Chepstow,

Willow Wren 3½-hour public cruises by the ASTEROPE are advertised to leave Middlewich at 1430 on 8, 15, 22 and 30 August.

 © G P Hamer 2 August 1976

TRIP OUT

September 1976

The news this summer that the Humber Paddle Steamer Group can no longer charter the LINCOLN CASTLE for charters is a sad blow for their trips, unlike some enthusiast outings, had a definite aim - to draw attention to the ship and demonstrate that there is a local potential for pleasure cruises. Interesting charters of large vessels in the south of England have been rare events in recent years and even on the Clyde, where enthusiast charters were once certain successes, a cruise earlier this year in the WAVERLEY had to be cancelled because of poor bookings. What has gone wrong? Perhaps it is time to examine the purpose of charters, If the aim is to demonstrate the potential of a particular cruise, then the sailing must be one that will appeal to the general public and it can only be judged a success if the shipowner begins to run similar trips regularly. If the aim is simply to provide a social gathering for enthusiasts, then the organisers really ought to be sociable. In practice, the hierarchy of each body seems to make a point of boycotting trips organised by anyone else, and the atmosphere aboard some societies' trips is actually depressing. The HPSG were a notable exception on this point, A third aim could be to raise money - perhaps for the preservation of a steamer - but this objective ought best to be forgotten; few bodies, if any, have made a significant overall profit from charter sailings. If there are to be any worthwhile enthusiast charters in future years, then there must be an effort by the various societies to find some common objectives and to promote charters that could achieve them.

Geoffrey Hamer

NORTH EAST

British Rail (Humber) Until the end of October, car drivers are being carried free on the ferry service in an effort to reverse a decline in the first half of the year in the number of cars crossing. The HPSG's charter to Grimsby, planned for 5 September, was cancelled,

Hill's Boatyard, York is looking for a 50-ft vessel carrying 70-100 passengers to add to its fleet.

EAST ANGLIA

Yarmouth & Gorleston Steamboat Co The new BROADLAND BELLE began operating on 26 July, sailing to Reedham or Oulton Broad from the upstream side of the Haven bridge at Great Yarmouth. The firm plans to introduce two new 80-ft vessels next year, each carrying 150-200 passengers; one will replace the NORWICH BELLE at Yarmouth and the other will operate for the associated General Estates Co at Hythe,

C J Lovewell, Norwich, is offering his 24-passenger steam launch PRINCESS MARGARET for sale for £5750. Built in 1904, she was fitted with a 2-cylinder compound engine before commencing trips on the River Wensum at Norwich last year.

THAMES

Mobird Trading Co, Gravesend The CAPTAIN JAMES COOK was due to sail to Southend again on 5 September after a temporary walkway had been built to the pierhead berths.

Thames Launches The KINGWOOD returned to service in late July between Westminster and Kew; her saloon and upper deck, damaged by fire last winter, have been removed.

SOUTH COAST

Boscombe Taurus Yacht Services have officially applied to change the BREARLEY's name to BOSCOMBE QUEEN.

Croson The POOLE BELLE has been advertised for sale with delivery in late September.

CHANNEL ISLANDS

British Rail After the two-ship service finishes at the end of October, the CALEDONIAN PRINCESS continues till early December when the EARL GODWIN takes over.

WEST OF ENGLAND

River Dart Steamboat Co The CONWAY CASTLE has been sold for service on the Gloucester-Sharpness Canal; the other 400-passenger vessel, the CARDIFF CASTLE, is still being offered for sale or charter nearly two years after her withdrawal from service on the River Dart.

Tony Soper, Dartmouth The 75-passenger SCOMBER, used for bird watching cruises has been offered for sale for £17 500.

BRISTOL CHANNEL

P & A Campbell Public sailings advertised for October include the season's last Swansea trip on the 3rd, trips from Penarth and Weston to Bristol on the 2nd and 17th, and the annual cruise to St Ives, Penzance and the Isles of Scilly on 8-11 October.

T D Lavender, Bath The business, consisting of the 2-year old narrow boat GARY operating on the River Avon, has been offered for sale as "probably one of the most profitable trip boats in the country."

R Lewis, Chepstow, begins river trips with the 54-passenger EREWASH PRINCESS this month. There will be a daily trip of 2½-3 hours, landing if possible at Tintern but times vary according to the tides.

MIDLAND WATERWAYS

Wyvern Shipping Co, Leighton Buzzard, has offered the 40-passenger narrow boat NUTFIELD for sale for "over £7000."

NORTH WALES AND NORTH WEST

Gwynedd Marine, Porthmadog, completed the MADOC MAID, a 44-passenger 35-ft fibreglass launch in June. She has been offered for sale for £20 000 with delivery at the end of the season.

Nu-way Cruisers, Carnforth, have commenced trips on the Lancaster Canal with a 36-passenger launch named IROQUOIS. She has made a public trip to Hest Bank every afternoon and is available for charter at other times.

MISCELLANY

The LADY SAVILLE, built in 1891 as the Plymouth tender and excursion vessel SIR RICHARD GRENVILLE, is to be broken up. Since 1947 she has been at Leigh-on-Sea as the clubhouse of the Essex Yacht Club; she is being replaced by the former Trinity House vessel BEMBRIDGE.

TRIP OUT

October 1976

NORTH EAST

British Rail (Humber) 65 members of a sports team, including 40 children, spent the night aboard the FARRINGFORD at New Holland on 14 September, after they had missed the LINCOLN CASTLE'S last sailing to Hull.

Ashanti Cruises, York The business, formerly run by W D Hand, has been taken over by Mr M H Jackson.

THAMES

CTC Lines After maintaining a spasmodic service this year, usually with only one craft, the hydrofoil service has been permanently withdrawn. The 'Raketa craft were introduced to the Thames in June 1974 by Speed Hydrofoils Ltd. They were in financial trouble by the autumn of 1975 when the Russians took over the service, but it was never profitable, like earlier fast services on the river using Italian hydrofoils (in 1972) and HM2 hovercraft (1973-74).

Thames Launches have this season operated the FERRY PRINCE, formerly with Thames Pleasure Craft, from Charing Cross. The VESTA has also been acquired from Thames Pleasure Craft, but has yet to be used.

Leisure Tyme Cruises' Little Venice, are offering restaurant cruises on the Regent's Canal with the 12-passenger narrow boat THE LACE PLATE, and the larger LADY ROSE OF REGENTS, chartered from the British Waterways Board.

Kennet & Avon Canal Trust is considering the future of the steamboat LEVIATHAN which entered service last year; running her takes up too much labour while the vessel's bottom may need renewing this winter. One solution would be to sell her, and a price of £4000 has been asked.

SOUTH COAST

Blue Funnel The VERDA broke down near Cowes in the early hours of 26 September. Her 99 passengers were taken off and landed at Cowes by the SOLENT SCENE which then towed the VERDA to Southampton.

CHANNEL ISLANDS

British Rail The SARNIA made her last excursion on 8 September and was then laid up. Her excursions have been very well patronised, averaging 1100 passengers, and she will run again in 1977 as the car ferries could not cope without her. There seems to have been no decision on the plan to replace her with a third car ferry.

Vedettes Armoricaines The BRITTANIA broke down on 28 August and the Granville-Jersey service was maintained from the 30th by the KEVRENN from Brest. The BRITTANIA returned on 12 September and continued till 25 September, then made a trip from Jersey to St-Malo on the 26th before leaving for winter lay up at Brest.

Herm Express Ferry The 52-passenger MAYWOOD was sold before the start of the season to Tagoa Ltd of Lowestoft.

Fairdeals Monopolies, St Helier The 80-passenger CAROL LINDA has been advertised for sale and her owners hope to obtain a larger vessel as a replacement.

WEST OF ENGLAND

Devon Dock, Pier & Steamship Co, Exmouth The EXONIA in service this season was a new vessel, replacing the 1947-built vessel which is now the TORBAY CLIPPER of J S Thompson at Torquay.

M D Barrow, Torguay, acquired the TENBY QUEEN during the season for trips from Torquay to Brixham.

BRISTOL CHANNEL

P & A Campbell The BALMORAL has had a very successful season with no breakdowns. The last public sailings are on 17 October from Penarth, Weston and Bristol.

S M Crockford, Tenby The TENBY QUEEN, replaced by the VIKING SAGA in July, went to M D Barrow of Torquay.

MIDLAND WATERWAYS

Nene Valley Cruises The 46-passenger waterbus AQUARIUS, on the market for two seasons, is to be sold by auction at Billing Aquadrome on 16 October.

Trent Valley Cruises The business has been offered for sale by its owner, Mr G Rowe, for £10 000. The 46-passenger narrow boat FLAMINGO has operated charter trips on the Trent & Mersey Canal since 1971.

www.trip-out.co.uk © G P Hamer 5 October 1976

TRIP OUT

November 1976

NORTH EAST

British Rail (Humber) The FARRINGFORD was off service for repairs in late September and early October, so the Humber Bridge cruise planned for 2 October was cancelled.

THAMES

The Westminster operators will again be offering a winter service to Tower and Greenwich at half-hourly intervals.

Thames Pleasure Craft For much of last summer only three vessels were in service - the FERRY PRINCESS and ST MAWES CASTLE based at Tower Pier and the FERRY QUEEN at Westminster. The 136-passenger TOWER BFLLE, used very little in the past year, has been advertised for sale.

Salter Bros The HENLEY, built in 1896 and converted from steam in 1958, has been advertised for sale; she has been laid up since 1973.

Surrey & Hampshire Canal Society is seeking sponsors for a 67-ft passenger boat which it hopes to run on the Basingstoke Canal at Odiham next summer.

SOUTH COAST

Boscombe Taurus Yacht Services have built a temporary mooring dolphin at Boscombe Pier and the partly refitted BOSCOMBE QUEEN made several trial berthings in September. The 163-ton vessel is now laid up at Poole and will be in service next season.

Croson The BOURNEMOUTH BELLE has had a number of charters this year in connection with powerboat races in Poole Bay; her season ended on 30 September. The POOLE BELLE made her final sailing for the firm on 29 September - a planned farewell cruise on the 30th was cancelled owing to heavy rain. The DORSET BFLLE was due to continue in service till 31 October. The new vessel is costing £100 000 and construction is now well under way at Bolson's Poole yard.

Misc Brownsea Island was closed to the public because of the fire risk from 17 August for the rest of the season. The local operators substituted trips round Poole Harbour, but F Wills and R Hale also ran trips to Wareham.

WEST OF ENGLAND

A Stuart, Exmouth, operated the DUCHESS OF YORK, previously with Dart Pleasure Craft, on the River Exe and Exeter Ship Canal this year. She made several trips between Exmouth and Exeter in August and this sailing may be offered regularly next year.

South Hams District Council decided at the last minute not to close the Dartmouth-Kingswear passenger ferry service at the end of September, and instead maintained a restricted service from 0800 to 1700 daily. This reversal was, it seems, prompted partly by a threat by Dart Pleasure Craft to run a ferry service. The Council is to offer the service, with the two passenger boats and landing stages, for sale by tender.

K Pill, Falmouth, took over the business of Mrs J P Hodgson last winter and exchanged the QUEEN OF HELFORD for the 50-passenger CHAMPION from Dartmouth. The CHAMPION has run with the QUEEN OF FALMOUTH on cruises to the Helford River, St Mawes and the River Fal from the Prince of Wales Pier.

BRISTOL CHANNEL

P & A Campbell The BALMORAL completed her Isles of Scilly weekend trip though the following day's Lundy sailing was cancelled by a gale. After the season's final public trip on 17 October and a charter on the 18th, she was due to go to Dartmouth for the winter.

MIDLAND WATERWAYS

Gloucester Shipping Co Ltd became the owners of the River Dart vessel CONWAY CASTLE in July and have been operating her on the River Severn above Gloucester.

Stroudwater Carriers, Gloucester, have offered the 50-passenger narrow boat GLOSTER PACKET for sale for £9500; the business at Gloucester which has been maintained for three seasons will be available to the purchaser.

Parties Afloat, Birmingham The owners, the Birmingham & Midland Canal Carrying Co Ltd, are being investigated by the Department of Trade after complaints of financial irregularities. The trip-boat ANSON has been removed from Birmingham by the British Waterways Board.

NORTH WEST

Merseyside PTE The ROYAL DAFFODIL is being offered for sale and the fleet will in future consist of just three ferries and the cruise ship ROYAL IRIS. The OVERCHURCH is to be fitted with a bar at a cost of £7000 so that she can be used for excursions, and she will presumably make the Manchester Ship Canal cruises which for two seasons have been performed by the ROYAL DAFFODIL.

MISCELLANY

The last of the Beachley-Aust ferries withdrawn in 1966, the SEVERN PRINCESS, has been acquired by Oceanic Services Ltd of Galway. She went to the West of Ireland some years ago to run a ferry service across the Shannon but it did not materialise and her present duties are not known.

The former Norwegian passenger/cargo ship MELANDDROTT (1948, 229 grt) has spent the summer at Glasson Dock after a short spell as a floating restaurant at Maryport. She is now on the market for £170 000.

 © G P Hamer 3 November 1976

TRIP OUT

December 1976

Two major news items, both very sad, deserve some comment this month.

First, the Humber Paddle Steamer Group, in some financial trouble since last summer, is disbanding. This is a sad end for the campaign led with such energy and flair by Esther and Barry Beadle for the past four years. As publicists for the LINCOLN CASTLE, they seemed to arouse more national interest than other enthusiast bodies in England - only the WAVERLEY campaign in Scotland overshadowed them. Their difficulties stemmed largely from a lack of local support and the continuing non-cooperation of British Rail. Though there is still at least two years before the Humber Bridge opens, the future for the LINCOLN CASTLE looks rather bleak.

Secondly, please shed a tear for one of the country's oldest pleasure steamers, the QUEEN OF THE BROADS, which is being broken up. Her record of service, spanning eighty-seven years in the same trade, was remarkable, the more so as she remained steam-powered till the end. Her sudden and unexpected sale is a cruel reminder that there is still a great deal of work to be done in publicising our excursion fleets - if only her existence had been advertised more widely, her owners might not have been able to get away with their act of vandalism.

Geoffrey Hamer

NORTH EAST

Tyne & Wear PTE The new SHIELDSNAN was completed in August at Pembroke Dock and is now in service between North and South Shields; she measures 93 gross tons.

Misc The English Tourist Board is bringing an action in the Admiralty Court against the owners of the former steam ferry NORTHUMBRIAN, in use as a floating pub at Gateshead until closing last February; the Tourist Board which supported the venture when it opened is owed around £30 000.

EAST ANGLIA

Pleasure Steamers, Great Yarmouth The QUEEN OF THE BROADS has been sold to George Overy & Co and is being broken up at Lowestoft. Built In 1889, she retained her original engine, while her whole life was spent on the Broads, operated by the Yarmouth & Gorleston Steamboat Co till the last war, then by Pleasure Steamers Ltd from 1946. Her last season was apparently successful with passengers often being turned away (she could carry 180) and her owners intend to replace her - a fibreglass waterbus-type vessel is apparently being sought.

Veteran Steamship Society A new boiler and new hull plates have been obtained for the RESOLUTE (of 1903), being restored on the River Yare.

Others The MAYWOOD, acquired from Guernsey, offered cruises in Lowestoft Harbour (Lake Lothing) last summer and is now running trips for angling parties. Also doing angling trips from Lowestoft is Searle's SEA LION which offers trips from Hunstanton in summer.

THAMES

Six vessels are maintaining the winter service from Westminster - the ELEANOR ROSE, FERRY PRINCESS, GREENWICH BELLE, LONDON BELLE, TIDEWAY and YARMOUTH BELLE. Sailings are usually half-hourly from 1030 to 1500 to Greenwich via the Tower, then at 1530 and 1600 to Tower only; each boat makes two round trips per day.

Two Tower-based boats are also running public trips this winter - the BRUNEL to HMS BELFAST and the FERRY BELLE to Westminster.

Thames Launches The winter service from Charing Cross to Tower and Greenwich will be suspended on 19 December; the vessels at present in service are the HURLINGHAM, QUEEN ELIZABETH and ROYAL PRINCESS.

MIDLAND WATERWAYS

K Rock & L Holder, Holt Fleet After only one season on the Severn, the 72-passenger WYRE LADY has been offered for sale for £14 500. When built by Denny in 1938 for trips from Glasgow, she cost £4200.

Cromford Canal Society is to introduce a 40-ft horse-drawn boat next year on the canal between Cromford, Derbyshire, and High Peak Wharf where a steam pumping engine is being restored.

Others Several narrow boat tripping businesses have been on the market this autumn, some having been mentioned in 'Trip Out' already. Those an offer include the FLAMINGO (Trent Valley Cruises, for £10 000), GARY (at Bath), GLOSTER PACKET, LANCING (Warwickshire Fly Boat Co, for £8500) and LAPWING (Inland Waterway Holiday Cruises, for £12 000).

MISCELLANY

Fares on British Rail's Humber, Tilbury-Gravesend, Isle of Wight and Channel Island services will rise when rail fares are increased on 2 January.

The paddler BRIGHTON BELLE (ex WINGFIELD CASTLE) is on the market for £30 000. Plans to berth her in the Brighton Marina have had to be abandoned and she has spent over two years in the Royal Albert Dock Basin in London.

The December issue of 'Waterways World' contains an interesting article on the Dudley Canal Trust's electric passenger boat ELECTRA.

www.trip-out.co.uk © G P Hamer 5 December 1976

TRIP OUT

January 1977

Many of the special events planned to mark the Queen's Silver Jubilee have a nautical connection. Perhaps the most impressive will be the Naval Review at Spithead on 28 June. In former years, Reviews brought together a large collection of pleasure steamers as well as warships; the Coronation Review in 1953 was attended by Campbell's BRISTOL QUEEN, CARDIFF QUEEN and GLEN GOWER, and by the MEDWAY QUEEN, in addition to the numerous South Coast excursion vessels. Already one excursion has been advertised for the day of the 1977 Review at a proposed fare of £15-18, so it looks as though the event could be lucrative for operators. Elsewhere, special events are planned for many ports as the Queen sails round the coast in the Royal Yacht BRITANNIA.

Geoffrey Hamer

NORTH EAST

British Rail announced in December that the Humber ferry service will, as expected, close on the opening of the Humber Bridge (now scheduled for March 1979). The service incurs a loss though it "nearly broke even" in 1975. Seventy people are employed on the service. The FARRINGFORD was due to go for overhaul from 4 to 24 January, to be followed by the LINCOLN CASTLE until 12 February; 10 crossings will operate in each direction during this period instead of the normal 17 from New Holland and 16 from Hull.

THAMES

At Westminster, the CHAY BLYTH, FERRY QUEEN and VICEROY have joined the winter roster, replacing the LONDON BELLE, FERRY PRINCESS and YARMOUTH BELLE, respectively, while at Tower Pier the VAROS has replaced the FERRY BELLE. Many days service have been missed because of the recent bad weather.

Thames Launches Following the closure of the Company's services, the fleet is laid up at Westminster and at the Company's yard at Twickenham.

SOUTH COAST

British Rail Moveable upper vehicle decks are to be fitted to the four latest car ferries, the CAEDMON, CENRED, CENWULF and CUTHRED, increasing the car capacity of each ship from 52 to 74.

CHANNEL ISLANDS

British Rail The 3670-grt CARFERRY VIKING II, built in 1964, has been acquired from Townsend Thoresen and should enter service next autumn after an extensive refit. Since last April she has run between Grenaa and Varberg on charter. The SARNIA will be withdrawn in September. Her relief sailings next season will be on Saturdays from 28 May to 3 September, on Sundays from 5 June to 4 September, and to Guernsey only on Wednesdays in July and August; in each case she has a day sailing from Weymouth at 1315 and returns overnight. This is a total of 38 round trips compared with 48 in 1976. She also makes her very popular day trips from Weymouth.

Condor The season is being extended to 7 January, instead of ending on 18 December. The start of the 1977 season has been brought forward to 11 February. The Company hopes to run a year-round service in 1978.
Isle of Sark Shipping Co The ILE DE SERK and L'ESPRIT DE SERK were slightly damaged in a collision with a cargo ship at St Peter Port on 16 December.

WEST OF ENGLAND
South Hams District Council The landing stages for the Dartmouth-Kingswear passenger ferry have been sold to Dartmouth Harbour Commissioners who will maintain them for the ferry. The two boats built for the service in 1957, the ADRIAN GILBERT and HUMPHREY GILBERT, were sold by tender and are now *owned* by the St Mawes Ferry Co of Falmouth. The passenger ferry service was handed over to Dart Pleasure Craft at the beginning of the year, leaving only the Lower Car Ferry under Council ownership.
Dart Pleasure Craft are maintaining the Dartmouth-Kingswear passenger ferry using their excursion boats; the service now runs from 0700 to 2300 daily.
R Bewley, Paignton After being offered for sale for £12 000 last autumn, the 46-passenger SPARKLE has been sold for service at Cowes; she was built in 1947 for Mr Bewley's uncle and has run from Paignton ever since. An 80-passenger replacement has been ordered from J Hinks & Son of Appledore for delivery in the spring.
Isles of Scilly Steamship Co Next summer's service follows the usual pattern with one round trip daily (except Sundays) from 4 April to 10 October, and two trips on Saturdays from 28 May to 3 September. The single fare for the 2¾-hour crossing is now £6.50.
Misc The ps COMPTON CASTLE, used as a café at Kingsbridge, is on the market for a "substantial" price. She is believed to be in working order but has not been moved for about ten years.

BRISTOL CHANNEL
P & A Campbell Coupon books for next Season are available as usual till 31 January; a £4 book of coupons costs £3.

TRIP OUT

February 1977

Efforts to carry on the good work of the Humber Paddle Steamer Group have begun and an informal meeting to inaugurate a new campaign on behalf of the LINCOLN CASTLE is being held in Hull on 12 February.

An interesting booklet published late last year covers the Portsmouth Harbour ferries and is particularly interesting in view of the number of Gosport ferries now converted for excursion work on the Solent and Thames. Copies are available from the author, J M Maber.

Geoffrey Hamer

NORTH EAST

British Rail (Humber) The LINCOLN CASTLE suffered extensive paddle wheel damage during her first crossing on 8 January; the 9 passengers were taken off and the service was suspended as the FARRINGFORD was on overhaul at the time. Though BR considered transferring a vessel from the south coast to run a passenger-only service, the ferry service was not resumed until 13 January when the LINCOLN CASTLE had completed her repairs.

Robinson's Cruisers, Dewsbury A new 60-passenger luxury vessel. named CALDER LADY is being built by West Riding Marine at Wakefield. She will replace the 40-passenger ATHENE.

EAST ANGLIA

Pleasure Steamers, Great Yarmouth It seems that the QUEEN OF THE BROADS went to Overy's yard last autumn for a refit and that structural faults were then discovered which made it unlikely that she could return to service. Her sale to Overy for scrapping followed. An illustrated article on the vessel appears in this month's issue of 'Waterways World', on sale on bookstalls.

THAMES

Mobird Trading Co, Gravesend, will be running the CAPTAIN JAMES COOK again next season; she will be available for evening charter trips, but resumption of public day trips depends on repairs to Southend Pier.

Thames Launches Two vessels - the KINGWOOD and VISCOUNT - have been sold to other Thames operators but the rest, though on the market, are being refitted and issued with 1977 certificates. Following tonnage remeasurements last autumn, five vessels are now around 110 gross tons - the ABERCORN, HURLINGHAM, ROYAL PRINCESS, ROYALTY and VISCOUNTESS.

George Wheeler Launches, Westminster The KINGWOOD has been acquired and is being rebuilt at Limehouse. A new saloon is being added to replace the one destroyed by fire last winter.

Thames Motor Boat Co (Westminster) The 150-passenger HER MAJESTY'S which ran between Richmond and Hampton Court has been offered for sale for £10 000. She is believed to have been built in the 1890's though some sources quote 1914 or 1925.

Salter Bros 1977 public sailings are the same as last year's, covering the Oxford-Abingdon, Reading-Henley, Marlow-Windsor and Windsor-Staines sections of the river from 23 May to 12 September. The season for charter trips extends from 8 April to 9 October.

Kennet & Avon Canal Trust A new steel narrow boat to be named JUBILEE has been acquired to replace the steamboat LEVIATHAN whose hull has been offered for sale for £1200.

SOUTH COAST

Red Funnel Fares were increased on 30 January - for passengers by 15% and for cars by 12½%.

Blue Funnel Cruises One of the three older vessels - the PRINCESSA, SOLENT QUEEN or VAROS - is on the market and is expected to be replaced by a larger vessel.

Croson The POOLE BELLE left Poole last December having presumably been sold.

Others The Coastal Cruising Association is repeating last year's charter of the BALMORAL from Bournemouth, Cowes and Portsmouth round the Isle of Wight on 2 April.

CHANNEL ISLANDS

British Rail The CARFERRY VIKING II, acquired for around £3.5 million, is to be renamed EARL WILLIAM and should run from Portsmouth from next autumn, replacing not only the SARNIA but the two container ships at present serving the islands from Portsmouth. The EARL GODWIN is due to make a Cherbourg-Guernsey excursion on 26-27 February - her first visit to a French port.

MIDLAND WATERWAYS

Wyvern Shipping Co, Leighton Buzzard The NUTFIELD, on the market for £7000, is to be replaced by a new vessel next season.

www.trip-out.co.uk © G P Hamer 1 February 1977

TRIP OUT

March 1977

As the number of large pleasure steamers has declined, special charter sailings have received greater attention. One annual trip round the Isle of Wight, for instance, is regarded as a great triumph by the organisers, in contrast with the almost complete lack of public complaint in 1968 on the withdrawal of the BALMORAL's South Coast excursion sailings (which included a twice—weekly 'round the Island' cruise). Perhaps in five or ten years' time we shall be told of the "success" of a charter that is the only trip of the season on the Bristol Channel. The great virtue of a public excursion vessel — that trips are available regularly to benefit a large number of passengers — is in danger of being neglected in the rush to organise trips that range from the interestingly unusual to the bizarre.

'Trip Out', of course, aims to give details of special trips, but space is limited and confirmation of timings and booking arrangements is often delayed. An example is the proposed visit of the ps WAVERLEY to Liverpool, Llandudno and Fleetwood in early May for which firm details are still not available. Interest in these trips and in the special cruises planned for the Naval Review will be high and early booking will be essential.

A meeting in Hull last month to try to continue the work of the Humber Paddle Steamer Group produced little except a proposal to form a LINCOLN CASTLE Branch of the Paddle Steamer Preservation Society.

Geoffrey Hamer

NORTH EAST

British Rail (Humber) The LINCOLN CASTLE returned to service after her refit on 19 February. The Royal Naval Association's annual cruise towards Spurn Head for a memorial service will be on 5 June.

THAMES

British Rail Reductions in the Tilbury—Gravesend ferry, due to be implemented on 28 February, have been postponed until at least 13 March because of a High Court action against BR by the Port of London Authority and the local Borough Councils.

Thames Launches The dispersal of the fleet continues and two more 100—ft boats have been delivered to other London operators — the ABERCORN is now with Catamaran Cruisers and the ROYALTY is with George Wheeler Launches. The remaining vessels are still at Charing Cross Pier or the firm's Twickenham yard, but some are to be handed over to new owners soon.

STRAITS OF DOVER

P & O Ferries The US—flag Boeing Jetfoil FLYING PRINCESS is to be chartered for a service from Zeebrugge to St Katharine's Dock, London, from June; the hydrofoil will take under 4 hours for the passage and the single fare will be £30. A rival company subsequently announced a London—Oostende route using Russian Kometa craft but details have yet to be negotiated.

SOUTH COAST

Two charter railings are being arranged for 26 June to view warships assembling in Spithead for the Naval Review on the 28th; the CCA is taking the GAY ENTERPRISE from Gosport and the PSPS has the BOSCOMBE QUEEN from Bournemouth.

Red Funnel The hydrofoil SHEARWATER 4 has gone to St Sampson, Guernsey, for a refit, making the 93-mile crossing from Southampton in 34 hours. It is reported that the OSBORNE CASTLE, kept in reserve last summer, is to see regular service this year.

Blue Funnel Cruises The reference to the VAROS in the last issue should have been to the VERDA. An order has apparently been placed for a sister ship to the SOLENT SCENE.

Croson The POOLE BELLE is being renamed WESTERN CLIPPER, presumably on behalf of her purchasers. She returned to Poole for a refit last month and one report is that she is destined for the Greek islands. Work on the new POOLE BELLE is progressing well.

CHANNEL ISLANDS

British Rail A record 634 000 passengers were carried in 1976.

Condor carried 344 863 passengers in 1976.

Trident Charter Co, Guernsey The HERM TRIDENT II was extensively damaged in a collision with a Danish tanker on 24 December; her crew escaped unhurt and no passengers were aboard at the time.

WEST OF ENGLAND

South Hams District Council The disposal of the Dartmouth-Kingswear passenger ferry has aroused local controversy. The two boats were sold to the St Mawes Perry Co for £14 000 but, as they did not get the franchise to run the service, they sold the boats to their original owners, British Rail, for a reported £20 000. Apparently they are to be used on an East Coast service, presumably Tilbury-Gravesend.

BRISTOL CHANNEL

P & A Campbell Calls at Lynmouth are to be included in four trips from Penarth and Weston next season for the first time since 1971; Lynmouth calls have been made only on trips from Swansea and Ilfracombe in recent years. An early season trip from Weston to Ilfracombe and Lundy is being promoted by Bristol Sea Scouts on 24 April.

NORTH WEST

Merseyside PTE The ROYAL DAFFODIL was sold to un-named Continental buyers in January for £72 500. A Parliamentary Bill to allow closure of the Woodside service has met delays but seems likely to become law; no statutory procedure is needed for the Seacombe route and closure of both routes to cut annual losses of some £1.2 million is becoming increasingly likely.

Manchester Ship Canal cruises are this year limited to one weekend instead of the six of recent years. Sailings are on 17 September from Liverpool and on the 18th from Manchester. The single fare is £3.90; contact Co-op Travel.

 © G P Hamer 7 March 1977

TRIP OUT

April 1977

NORTH EAST

British Rail (Humber) The PSPS is chartering the LINCOLN CASTLE on 10 July for a non-landing cruise to Goole.

Misc The former Tyne ferry NORTHUMBRIAN has been sold to a Brussels man for use as a floating restaurant at Boom on the River Rupel in Belgium. The price was apparently insufficient to cover debts incurred during her spell as a restaurant at Gateshead.

EAST ANGLIA

Contour Craft, Wroxham, built a 70-passenger catamaran waterbus, the CONTOUR CRAFT I, which ran some trips to Salhouse Broad last summer. A 63-ft catamaran stern-wheel Mississippi-style vessel is being built at a cost of £50 000, and will be operated this summer jointly with the Hotel Wroxham, carrying up to 100 passengers on trips to Salhouse and Horning. The design, by Don Tate & Associates, has cause& local controversy because of possible difficulties in handling a large craft in the narrow River Bure.

THAMES

British Rail The former Dartmouth ferries ADRIAN and HUMPHREY GILBERT are to be used on the Tilbury-Gravesend ferry, and the present vessels, the CATHERINE and EDITH, will be sold.

Thames Pleasure Craft A new vessel, the GOLDEN SALAMANDER, was delivered by Impala Marine, Twickenham, at the end of March.

Thames Launches Another of the fleet's large vessels, the QUEEN ELIZABETH, has been delivered to new owners, and was the only passenger vessel following the Boat Race on 19 March.

W Mould, Kingston The two Mould brothers have retired and the business, owned by the family for over 100 years, has been sold to the F & B Boat Co, who will continue the trips to Hampton Court.

Kennet & Avon Canal Trust The steamboat LEVIATHAN has been sold. Her replacement, the JUBILEE, a 50-ft steel vessel built by Peter Nicholls of Redditch, should enter service at Easter. Public cruises from Crofton are to be offered at weekends when the pumping engines are in steam, but trips will otherwise be charters.

Misc The World Ship Society has chartered one of the Tower Pier vessels for a day trip to Southend on 7 August.

SOUTH COAST

British Rail For the fitting of their new upper decks, the CENWULF is due to go to Lowestoft and the CAEDMON will go to London.

P & A Campbell See 'Bristol Channel'.

Croson The BOURNEMOUTH and DORSET BELLEs were slipped for refit in March. The WESTERN CLIPPER (ex POOLE BELLE) is being converted to a yacht at Poole.

Misc The farmer Red Funnel vessel MEDINA, used as a floating restaurant at Ramsgate, is to go to the Brighton Marina to perform a similar function.

CHANNEL ISLANDS

British Rail Conversion of the EARL WILLIAM is to be carried out at Holyhead at a cost of £2 million; she will carry 1000 passengers and 170 cars. This season, the SARNIA is expected to offer day trips from Weymouth to Guernsey every Tuesday, as last year.

BRISTOL CHANNEL

P & A Campbell The BALMORAL was drydocked at Penzance, then sailed to Poole on 1 April ready for the charter round the Isle of Wight on the 2nd. This was completed as scheduled, though support was poor and resulted in a loss for the organisers. Easter Bristol Channel sailings start on Good Friday and include a day trip from Penarth and Weston to Ilfracombe and Lundy on the Sunday. The ship sails on a variety of trips in April and May charters open to the public include Weston to Ilfracombe and Lundy on 17 and 24 April, Swansea direct to Lundy on 15 May, and Weston and Penarth to Mumbles and Tenby on 21 May. Summer sailings include more up-Channel trips, with fewer sailings from Swansea. The BALMORAL is due to visit Spithead on 25-28 June to run cruises from Southsea and Southampton to the Review fleet. On the day of the Review, itself, there is a day cruise (fare £15) and an evening cruise (£5) from Southampton where Blue Funnel Cruises are booking agents. The "old" SCILLONIAN is expected to be obtained to cover Bristol Channel sailings during, this period.

R Lewis, Chepstow Trips to Tintern in the INDEPENDENCE (ex-ERE-WASH PRINCESS) are offered for parties on most dates from 1 April to 21 October; times advertised vary between 0902 and 2142, depending on tides.

Jones & Teague, Saundersfoot The 59-passenger NEMESIS II has been advertised for sale.

Dyfed County Council The last of the Neyland - Hobbs Point ferries, the CLEDDAU QUEEN, built In 1956 as a paddle steamer and converted to a motor vessel twelve years later, has been sold to G R Christian & Son of Amble, Northumberland, who are renaming her NORLAND QUEEN. Her intended use is not known.

NORTH WEST

Waverley Steam Navigation Co The WAVERLEY is due to sail south to Liverpool after a day trip from Campbeltown to Ayr on 28 April. Day excursions from Liverpool are on 1 and 7 May to Llandudno and a cruise to Puffin Island, and on 8 May to Fleetwood with a cruise in Morecambe Bay. Shorter cruises, mainly for school parties, are being offered from Llandudno on 2 May and from Liverpool for the rest of the week. She will return to the Clyde by 15 May. Bookings can be made with the owners in Glasgow.

Isle of Man Steam Packet Co This season's Liverpool to Llandudno excursions are on Sundays from 5 June to 4 September (except 19 June), Tuesdays from 28 June to 23 August (except 5 July and 2 Aug) and Thursdays from 16 June to 1 September (except 30 June and 14 July). The day return fare is £3.

 © G P Hamer 3 April 1977

TRIP OUT

May 1977

NORTH EAST

British Rail Humberside County Council has agreed in principle to buy the LINCOLN CASTLE for operation on the Humber after the ferry service is withdrawn by BR.

Hill's Boatyard, York The 60-passenger PRINCESS ANNE has been sold apparently for non-passenger use; her replacement is a new. 100-passenger saloon boat named DUKE OF YORK.

J F Bogg, Bridlington The YORKSHIRE BELLE is being chartered by, the CCA on 23 July for a 5-hour cruise past Scarborough.

EAST ANGLIA

Yarmouth & Gorleston Steamboat Co Services are now being operated under the name Southern Coastcrafts Ltd, as is the Southampton-Hythe service. The NORWICH BELLE will be in service this summer and her replacement by a 90-ft catamaran has been postponed until 1978.

C J Lovewell, Norwich The steam launch PRINCESS MARGARET will be running trips on the rivers Wensum and Yare again this summer.

THAMES

All boats on the tideway in London were laid up over Easter because of a strike, but services, are now back to normal.

Sargent Bros (Thames) Ltd, Woolwich, are introducing, a new. 57-ft 150-passenger boat named ENCHANTÉ on charter trips.

Woods River Services, Tower Pier The long-delayed 126-ft long SILVER BARRACUDA has been delivered and will enter service this month on restaurant cruises and charter trips.

Thames Launches, have resumed half-hourly services from Charing Cross to Tower and Greenwich using, six boats - the HURLINGHAM, ROYAL PRINCESS, VESTA and VISCOUNTESS, together with the MARCHIONESS and QUEEN ELIZABETH, both now owned by a new company, Thames Party Boats Ltd. The FERRY PRINCE which ran from Charing Cross last year has returned to Thames Pleasure Craft of Tower Pier.

Arthur Jacobs, Windsor The 118-passenger WINDSOR JUBILEE was completed this spring and replaced the WINDSOR LADY which has gone to Reading. A sister to be named WINDSOR JESTER is under construction at Jacobs' yard.

D & T Scenics, Reading, have acquired the 85-passenger WINDSOR LADY and have renamed her SCENIC LADY. Trips are to be introduced from Wallingford in addition to the established trips from Reading.

SOUTH COAST

The Newhaven-Dieppe ferry SENLAC will be sailing to Spithead on 28 June for the Naval Review.

J Butcher & Sons, Southsea The COLIN JAMES, a 41-ft tug with a summer capacity of 62 passengers, was completed by Impala Marine at Twickenham earlier this year. All the firm's vessels will be running cruises to the Review fleet from 24 to 30 June.

Boscombe Taurus Yacht Services were recently fined £800 for using the BOSCOMBE QUEEN for a charter last July when she had no passenger certificate.

Croson The DORSET BELLE ran Dorset Lakes cruises at Easter - the first Easter trips by Croson for some years. Sailings resume in mid-May. All three vessels have been chartered for the Review on 28 June.

WEST OF ENGLAND

Millbrook Steamboat Co has acquired the last of the River Dart Steamboat Co's vessels, the CARDIFF CASTLE, laid up since. 1974. The DEVON BELLE has been sold for service at Falmouth.

Isles of Scilly Steamship Co The new SCILLONIAN is to be named by Prince Charles on 17 May and is due to enter service in early June. The present vessel is expected to operate on the Bristol Channel in late June.

Chapman & Hewitt, Padstow An 80-ft vessel to carry 240-250 passengers is being built at the firm's Wadebridge yard. To be named THOR, she will offer coastal cruises from Padstow in succession to the 75-passenger QUEEN OF CORNWALL which has been sold to Clifford Barbeary for trips from Ilfracombe.

NORTH WEST

Merseyside PTE The ROYAL DAFFODIL is reported to have been sold to Greeks for £55 000; the previously reported sale for £75 000 presumably fell through. Merseyside County Council and the local district councils are to have "consultations" over the next few weeks to look at ways of retaining the ferry services. A local pressure group, Friends of the Ferries, has been formed.

Waverley Steam Navigation Co The WAVERLEY sailed from Campbeltown to Liverpool on 29 April and was open to the public on the 30th, attracting over 2000 visitors. She made her only trip to Llandudno on 1 May but because of tidal conditions there the return journey had to be delayed and the afternoon cruise was extended to Amlwch; despite a very fast homeward trip, Liverpool was reached two hours late. Other day trips from Liverpool are on the 7th to Bangor and Beaumaris (non-landing) and on 8 May to Fleetwood, which is fully booked. The intervening days are occupied with short cruises on the Mersey.

Boatel Cruises, Wheelton Formerly owned by R K Cartwright, the business is now run by a Mr R T Smith. The LADY MARY is being joined by a new 80-passenger vessel named JUBILEE QUEEN. The trips on the Leeds & Liverpool Canal are mainly charters.

IRISH SEA

Isle of Man Steam Packet Co The SNAEFELL, MONA'S ISLE and MANX MAID have been drydocked on the Mersey; the MANXMAN has gone to Govan, the LADY OF MANN is at Troon for guarantee overhaul, and the MONA'S QUEEN went to Manchester in January for her refit. Unusual parts to be visited by the ships this year are understood to include Heysham and Holyhead. The Liverpool to Llandudno day return fare is £3.50 not £3 as originally advertised.

MISCELLANY

The National Trust's 1976 visiting figures show the following totals for islands in its care: Brownsea 107 000 (146 000 in 1975); Farne Islands 34 000 (47 000); Lundy 21 000 (20 000).

 © G P Hamer 4 May 1977

TRIP OUT

June 1977

A new group has been formed to support the Humber steamer, the "Save ps LINCOLN CASTLE Campaign".

I believe that the official programme for the Naval Review on 28 June is available from the Souvenir Shop at Portsmouth Naval Base, for 75p including postage. The June issue of 'Ships Monthly' includes a special feature on this event.

The cruise from Bridlington mentioned in the last issue has been cancelled. The vessel's Certificate does not cover Scarborough, but I included the sailing in 'Trip Out' because I was told by one of the organisers that a special certificate would be obtained. I apologise for being misled in this way.

Geoffrey Hamer

THAMES

Mobird Trading Co This season's Southend day trips are from Tilbury, leaving at 1000, daily. The CAPTAIN JAMES COOK berthed overnight at Tilbury last season but public sailings were from Gravesend.

Meridian Line Cruises The SWANAGE QUEEN is not expected to offer any public trips to Southend this year; all suitable dates have been booked by private parties.

J P T Coakley, Tower Pier The VAROS is being chartered by the Thames Ship Society on 10 July for a day trip from Tower Pier, Greenwich and Tilbury to Southend (fare £2.50). One of Coakley's vessels is making a similar trip on 7 August for the WSS.

W A Jackson, Westminster, is running the HENLEY between Richmond and Hampton Court; built in 1896, she was owned by Salter Bros until this year.

M J Pett, Ramsgate The NEW GOLDEN SPRAY has been advertised "for quick sale" but is still running cruises lasting 30 minutes to 2 hours from Ramsgate.

STRAITS OF DOVER

P & O Jet Ferries The FLYING PRINCESS arrived in this country on 19 April and carried out various demonstration trips, mainly for the Navy. She made cruises from the Brighton Marina on 1 May and came to the Thames on the 25th, making several trial trips before opening the Zeebrugge service on 1 June.

SOUTH COAST

British Rail For the Naval Review, the SENLAC is offering an all-day cruise from Newhaven on 28 June to the anchorage off Ryde; the fare from Newhaven or Sussex railway stations is £18.50.

Southampton City Council The last crossings of the Woolston floating bridge are due on 11 June and the new Itchen Bridge opens the next day.

Croson The DORSET BELLE re-entered service on 12 May, followed by the BOURNEMOUTH BELLE on the 22nd. The new POOLE BELLE was launched on 3 May and was due to enter service on 1 June. Sailings are identical to last year's but fares are up by about 12½%.

WEST OF ENGLAND

Exeter Maritime Museum is running trips the full length of the Ship Canal with THE DUCHESS (formerly the DUCHESS OF YORK of London, Dartmouth and Exmouth). Sailings are from Exeter Quay at 1430 daily till 10 September, taking 3 hours for the round trip to Turf Lock, calling at Countess Wear Quay en route.

South Western Steam Navigation Co, Paignton The sailings from the pier, maintained for many years by the PRIDE OF PAIGNTON, have been taken over by the WESTERN LADY vessels. Rising costs are blamed for the withdrawal of the PRIDE. The Company, under the same ownership as Paignton Pier, ran the ps PRIDE OF DEVON (ex WALTON BELLE) from Torquay in 1946-48.

Western Lady Ferry Service Besides the trips from Torquay and Brixham which follow the pattern of previous years, the vessels are running cruises: from Paignton Pier this season.

Isles of Scilly Steamship Co The new ship was named SCILLONIAN III by Prince Charles at Appledore on 17 May, having already completed her trials. She left the next day for Scilly, arriving early on the 19th. She made her first public sailing from Penzance to St Mary's on 25 May and took over the service completely soon after. The "old" SCILLONIAN has been sold, to P & A Campbell.

BRISTOL CHANNEL

P & A Campbell The SCILLONIAN has been acquired and is being renamed DEVONIA with Bristol as her port of registry - the first Campbell ship to be registered there since 1961. There is still no definite news of her activities after late June when she relieves the BALMORAL on the Bristol Channel.

NORTH WEST

Waverley Steam Navigation Co The WAVERLEY failed to reach North Wales on 7 May and had to return to the Mersey because of heavy seas. She did complete the Fleetwood trip on 8 May before returning to Scotland. Her Mersey visit is believed to have shown an overall loss, mainly because of the poor response to the weekday cruises for school parties.

MISCELLANY

The NORWEST LAIRD, being converted at Hayle into a floating pub, is to revert to her original name of LOCHIEL; she is owned by Courage and will be berthed at Bristol.

 © G P Hamer 8 June 1977

TRIP OUT

July 1977

NORTH EAST

British Rail (Humber) Tickets are still available for the non-landing cruise to Goole on 10 July, leaving New Holland at 1310 and Hull at 1345 (back at 1815 and 1840, respectively).

EAST ANGLIA

Contour Craft, Wroxham The new 'mock-Mississippi' vessel was named SOUTHERN COMFORT on 30 May, the ceremony being performed with a bottle of Southern Comfort. She entered service on 3 June.

THAMES

British Rail On 24 June the High Court ruled that BR can carry out the planned reductions in the Tilbury-Gravesend ferry schedules in an effort to save £17 500 per year.

Greenwich Pleasure Craft The two modern vessels have been joined by the 153-passenger PRINCESS MARINA. Built in 1928 as the BRIT, she ran from Great Yarmouth, Bridlington and Whitby before coming to the Thames in the 1950's; she was laid up last season but has now been refitted for charter work.

Woods River Services, Tower Pier The new SILVER BARRACUDA is being used solely for charter work; she is said to have cost £300 000 to build. The VITA is laid up this season.

J P T Coakley, Tower Pier The VAROS collided with Southwark Bridge during an evening charter on 5 June. 13 of the 120 passengers were slightly injured and the VAROS returned to Tower Pier with considerable damage.

Westminster The former non-landing cruises, operated by R J Maynard, D G Moore and the Tideway Passenger Boat Co, now include calls at Festival Gardens Pier, Battersea, for the 'British. Genius' exhibition there. Battersea was served regularly by these operators until the closure of the funfair in 1974.

SOUTH COAST

Three cross-channel ships offered cruises to the Review on 28 June - the VIKING VALIANT from Southampton (fare £30), the SENLAC from Newhaven (£18.50) and the SARNIA from Weymouth (£16). The BALMORAL spent at least part of the preceding weekend running cruises round the fleet from Southsea (South Parade Pier), becoming the largest vessel to call there for some years.

Portsmouth Harbour Ferry Co Public excursions this year are from Gosport and the South Parade Pier only. Both the GAY ENTERPRISE and SOUTHSEA QUEEN were kept fully occupied on cruises to the Review fleet at Spithead.

Boscombe Taurus Yacht Services The ISLAND QUEEN entered service on 5 June. The BOSCOMBE QUEEN made her first sailing on 25 June on a PSPS charter to Spithead in company with the ISLAND QUEEN. Both vessels repeated this cruise on the 26th, for the PSPS, and on 27, 28 and 29 June as public trips.

Croson The new POOLE BELLE entered service on 1 June; she cost over £100 000, carries 250 passengers and has a maximum speed of 13 knots, though the service speed is 11 knots. The old POOLE BELLE, now renamed WESTERN CLIPPER, was bought by Messrs Salamar, Bent & Rhodes and is now doing charter work in the Greek islands.

R A Hale, Poole The WATER GYPSY has been joined by the WATER WYTCH making regular trips to Wareham; departure times vary according to the tides.

CHANNEL ISLANDS

British Rail The SARNIA is making 21 day excursions to Guernsey this season at an adult fare of £12.50 which includes a package of duty-free goods. Remaining trips are on Tuesdays till 6 September and on Wednesday 7 September, leaving Weymouth at 0900, due back 2030.

WEST OF ENGLAND

South Western Steam Navigation Co, Paignton The PRIDE OF PAIGNTON is laid up in the River Dart and is expected to be sold.

W G Pill, Falmouth, was the buyer of the DEVON BELLE from Plymouth. Renamed NEW QUEEN OF HELFORD, she plies from the Prince of Wales Pier, apparently in place of the QUEEN OF FALMOUTH, while Mr Pill's three other vessels continue to ply from the Custom House Quay.

BRISTOL CHANNEL

P & A Campbell The SCILLONIAN took over from the BALMORAL at. Ilfracombe on the evening of 21 June, after sailing empty from Swansea where she had berthed overnight. Her name was changed to DEVONIA during her spell on the Bristol Channel which continued after the BAIMORAL's return; she made extra trips from Swansea on 2 and 3 July while the BALMORAL ran from Penarth and Weston. The DEVONIA is expected to have a brief refit before Campbells use her elsewhere for the remainder of the season. She seems likely to replace the BALMORAL on the Bristol Channel next year or in 1979.

Bristol Packet The TOWER BELLE was acquired from the Thames and the owners hope to introduce cruises down through the Avon Gorge.

NORTH WEST

Merseyside PTE The ROYAL DAFFODIL left the Mersey on 2 May for Greece under her new name of IOULIS KEAS II. The Queen made a 50-minute cruise in the ROYAL IRIS on 21 June.

IRISH SEA

Isle of Man Steam Packet Co The three passenger steamers entered service in early June - the MANXMAN on the 3rd and the MONA'S ISLE and SNAEFELL on the 4th. The season's first Liverpool-Llandudno trip was cancelled by bad weather, as were the first three Llandudno-Douglas trips (this service actually started on 15 June). The MONA'S ISLE had a charter from Heysham to Douglas and back on 8 June and a trip in the other direction on the 14th. On 25 June the MANXMAN took a charter from Warrenpoint to Douglas.

TRIP OUT

August 1977

The generally miserable weather of this summer, coming after two very fine seasons, is providing poor trade for excursion operators. Enthusiasts have much more than the weather to talk about, though. First, in mid-July the DEVONIA arrived in London for a programme of excursions whose non-existent advance publicity has shocked even hardened observers of Campbell's. It seems that every few years the firm tries to commit financial suicide, employing similar instincts to the lemming. One can only hope that losses incurred on the Thames do not jeopardise the future of Bristol Channel sailings. The BALMORAL is worn out and this season's crazy venture must seal her fate, so if there is no money available to improve the DEVONIA's passenger accommodation, the Bristol Channel will be left with an unsuitable ship.

Meanwhile in Scotland, the fate of the ps WAVERLEY still seems to hang in the balance after her grounding on 15 July. Her replacement, the QUEEN OF SCOTS - fondly remembered as the CORONIA of Scarborough and later as the BOURNEMOUTH QUEEN - is attempting schedules that are really beyond her capabilities, though it is pleasing to see the ship in the limelight at 42 years of age.

At the time of her grounding, the WAVERLEY was carrying 620 passengers; on the same day, the DEVONIA had 8 aboard - such of the mixed-up world of today's pleasure steamers.

Geoffrey Hamer

THAMES

P & A Campbell The DEVONIA began trips to Southend on 14 July, sailing daily (except Mondays) as follows: Tower Pier 1000, Greenwich 1030, Southend 1340-1615, Greenwich 1920, Tower Pier 2000; fare £5. On Wednesdays, Saturdays and Sundays there is a 1½-hour estuary cruise from Southend at 1415 (£1.50).

British Rail The reduced Tilbury-Gravesend ferry timetable starts on 8 August; early morning and late night services will be ended.

R G (Passenger Launches), Erith A sister for the catamaran TWIN-STAR is being built by Conyer Marine of Conyer, near Faversham.

J P T Coakley, Tower Pier The VAROS was back in service in early July, having been repaired after her June accident.

Westminster The FORDSON struck Hammersmith Bridge on a Kew - Westminster sailing on 4 July; 8 passengers were injured as the wheelhouse collapsed. The bridge is the lowest over the tidal river and usually causes delays to boats at high water.

Salter Bros Besides the HENLEY, now running between Richmond and Hampton Court, the MARLOW has also been sold and has been transported to Willen Lake at Milton Keynes.

SOUTH COAST

Boscombe Taurus Yacht Services Because the mooring dolphin at Boscombe Pier is not ready, the BOSCOMBE QUEEN was laid up at Poole after her Review sailings; her PSPS charters for this event were from Bournemouth Pier, but the public trips on 27-29 June were from Poole and Yarmouth, with the ISLAND QUEEN taking Boscombe passengers.

Croson For the Review, the BOURNEMOUTH BELLE was at Southampton from 25 to 29 June for charter trips, while the POOLE BELLE had charters to Spithead on 26 June from Poole and on the 28th from Lymington. The DORSET BELLE was retained on public trips from Bournemouth "to maintain a token service".

CHANNEL ISLANDS

British Rail The Portsmouth service is due to be opened on 31 October by the EARL GODWIN, and the EARL WILLIAM will take over later in the year.

Vedettes Blanches, St-Malo, have acquired the Danish LANGELAND (1965, 907 grt) and have renamed her SOLIDOR. Carrying 500 passengers and 60 cars, she is similar in design to the CALEDONIA. She arrived in St-Malo on 18 July and after a trial trip on the 19th, began a twice-daily service to Jersey on the 20th, under the name of Emeraude Ferries.

Condor The CONDOR 5 damaged a foil on 20 July and repairs could take 5 weeks; the other two craft are running a revised schedule. The two Sark tenders are now the SKYLARK (formerly on the Herm service) and WHITE HEATHER III; the WHITE HEATHER II is laid up at St Peter Port.

Vedettes Armoricaines Because of heavy traffic, the BRITTANIA was assisted by the KEVRENN on occasions until 25 June when the latter returned to Brest.

BRISTOL CHANNEL

P & A Campbell The DEVONIA made a day trip from Pembroke Dock to Lundy on 6 July, probably the first time a Campbell ship has ever made this trip. She stood in for the BALMORAL on the 10th while that ship had her fourth day off service this season through engine trouble. The DEVONIA then sailed to the Thames. At the end of her season, the BALMORAL makes the annual weekend Isles of Scilly trip on 14-17 October then returns to the south coast for a charter on 22 October from Cowes, Southampton and Bournemouth to Portland Harbour.

NORTH WEST

Bowness Bay Boating Co The MISS CUMBRIA II was delivered from Holland this spring; she is identical to the MISS CUMBRIA.

MISCELLANY

The NORWEST LAIRD arrived at Avonmouth from Hayle on 1 June ready for her new role as the floating pub LOCHIEL. The MEDINA was towed from Ramsgate to the Brighton Marina on 14 June and is to open as a restaurant later this year.

 © G P Hamer 3 August 1977

TRIP OUT

September 1977

The WAVERLEY returned to service at the beginning of the month after completion of repairs. Her season has been extended to 26 September to try to recover some of the revenue lost since the accident on 15 July. Her owners are appealing for money to offset their losses.

Geoffrey Hamer

THAMES

P & A Campbell The DEVONIA missed about four days' sailings after a collision with a barge on 19 August which necessitated repairs to her bow. The last sailing of the season is on 25 September. She appears to be carrying 200-300 passengers from London on occasions, but average loadings are much lower.

Meridian Line Cruises are acting as booking agents for the DEVONIA at Greenwich. The SWANAGE QUEEN is staying in commission next winter and public evening cruises are being offered on two dates in October and December.

W A Jackson The THAMES QUEEN has taken over the Richmond to Hampton Court sailings and the HENLEY has taken up sailings from Westminster to Hampton Court. Jackson's GOLDEN SPRAY II, last used for carrying passengers in 1974, sank at Westminster moorings on 12 August, the wreck was raised and taken to Kew.

Westminster The FORDSON returned to service between Westminster and Kew in the second half of August, the damage to her Wheelhouse and bow caused in July having been repaired.

B J Cockrill, Chatham, died around 18 months ago. The QUEEN OF THE SOUTH III is still run by his family but no public trips are offered, their main work being the ferrying of crews to and from ships anchored in the Medway.

SOUTH COAST

Blue Funnel Cruises took over the Star Boats business and the SOUTHAMPTON BELLE before the start of the season.

Boscombe Taurus Yacht Services The BOSCOMBE QUEEN entered regular service on 1 August, leaving Boscombe for Yarmouth at 1015 from Mondays to Fridays. The ISLAND QUEEN runs daily except Saturdays, usually to the 'Dorset Lakes' in the morning and to Swanage in the afternoon.

Others The BALMORAL is chartered on 22 October by Waverley Travel Ltd for a day trip from Cowes, Southampton and Bournemouth to Portland Harbour. On the 23rd she makes a single trip from Bournemouth to Eastbourne, viewing the piers of the Solent and Sussex coast, as part of an inclusive weekend organised by the Department of Tourism in Bournemouth.

WEST OF ENGLAND

Chapman & Hewitt, Padstow The new 80-ft vessel, originally to have been named THOR, was completed in July as the JUBILEE QUEEN. She carries 250 passengers and was built of steel at Wadebridge entirely by her two owners.

BRISTOL CHANNEL

P & A Campbell The BALMORAL made a Pembroke Dock to Lundy trip on 12 August, repeating the trip introduced by the DEVONIA in July. There is a day trip from Tenby to Lundy on 30 September. Last trips of the season from Swansea, Mumbles and Porthcawl are on 29 Sep, from Penarth, Weston and Bristol on 9 October and from Ilfracombe to Lundy on 11 October; the final Bristol Channel trip is the weekend cruise to St Ives, Penzance and St Mary's on 14-17 October from Penarth, Weston and Ilfracombe.

WEST WALES

C I Crockford The TUDOR PRINCE has been offered for sale, though she has been offering her usual cruises from Pembroke Dock this year.

MIDLAND WATERWAYS

T & D Murrell, Uxbridge The narrow boat STAMFORD, used temporarily for passenger trips last year, has returned to cargo carrying and has been replaced by the barge FARNWORTH which, after conversion for passenger trips, was registered at Liverpool with a gross tonnage of 40.

Wyvern Shipping Co, Leighton Buzzard The NUTFIELD was sold last winter and has been used for weekend "camping" cruises from Bristol to Bath, carrying up to 12 passengers. Her replacement, the LEIGHTON LADY, entered service in May.

K Rock & L Holder, Holt Fleet The WYRE LADY has been out of use this season and is still being offered for sale.

IRISH SEA

Isle of Man Steam Packet Co Unusual excursions in July included Warrenpoint-Douglas (10 July, MANXMAN), Larne-Douglas (18th, MONA'S ISLE) and Stranraer-Douglas (24th, MONA'S ISLE). A Workington to Douglas charter on 29 August was cancelled as the MANXMAN became stormbound in Workington Harbour. Llandudno sailings have been cancelled by gales on several occasions and the SNAEFELL was off service from 17 to 19 August for docking after hitting the Welsh pier. On 24 August, the MANXMAN from Fleetwood could not approach Douglas because of a severe gale and had to return with her 800 passengers; day trippers had their fares refunded. The SNAEFELL docked at Birkenhead on 30 August after making her last sailings of the season the previous day.

MISCELLANY

The Isle of Wight nightclub RYDE QUEEN, formerly the paddle steamer RYDE, suffered £100 000 of damage in a fire on 10 August.

 © G P Hamer

TRIP OUT

October 1977

NORTH EAST

British Rail propose to transfer the Tilbury ferry EDITH to the Humber to replace the LINCOLN CASTLE which is said to be increasingly uneconomic to operate. Both the Railwaymen's Union and Humberside County Council have objected because the EDITH has no car space. Meanwhile, at a meeting on 21 October, the Humberside District Councils Association is to discuss what grants the local councils could give towards the purchase of the paddle steamer by the County Council.

EAST ANGLIA

Broads Tours, Wroxham, completed a new 90-seat launch, the PRINCESS KATHARINE, this year. She replaced the smaller COUNTESS of 1899. Similar new boats are to be built to replace the AEKOIA (built in 1910) and EMPRESS (1931).

Pleasure Steamers, Great Yarmouth The new QUEEN OF THE BROADS entered service on 16 August and offered cruises to Reedham (on Sundays), Oulton Broad (MWF) and Horning (TTh). She carries 120 passengers (compared with the 180 of her steam-powered predecessor) and is similar in appearance to the rival BROADLAND BELLE.

THAMES

British Rail The ADRIAN and HUMPHREY GILBERT have been refitted at Weymouth; by mid-September the latter had been fitted with a new engine and deckhouse.

Woods River Services The SILVER BARRACUDA, used until now solely on charters for conferences and social functions, is to offer public evening cruises. The fare for a 4-hour cruise with dinner and wine is apparently £12.75.

STRAITS OF DOVER

Both Sealink and Townsend Thoresen are offering a £5 day return to France this winter, compared with the normal single fare of £7.60. From London, BR is charging £6.50 for a day trip to Boulogne or Calais.

An interesting case before an industrial tribunal in September concerned a master dismissed by Townsend Thoresen for having a private business venture which was said to conflict with the Company's interests. He was involved with the Coastal Cruise Line which planned to operate excursions from continental ports to Deal and Dover. Later plans apparently involved 'duty-free' coastal excursions between Dutch, Belgian and French ports; however, £70 000 is to be spent on repairs to Deal Pier by the local authority. There has been no indication of which ship would be used for the venture.

SOUTH COAST

Hooper & Ragless, Bognor The 62-passenger PIXIE MATTHEWS was sold last spring to Troon owners, but has since been offered for sale again. Her withdrawal from Bognor means that of the Sussex resorts, only Eastbourne and Littlehampton offer trips in DoT-certificated boats.

M J Rayment, Cowes After only one season, the former Paignton vessel SPARKLE has been offered for sale for £10 500.

Blue Funnel Cruises The new vessel is named ISLAND SCENE and arrived at Southampton on the night of 1/2 September, having been delivered from Bideford by joint-owner Horace Barkham and his son. The interior fitting out will be completed by the owners and she will not enter service until next year. The Ryde-based SOLENT QUEEN was found to be partly flooded on the morning of 11 September, but she was pumped out and sailed as advertised.
Red Funnel Having completed her season of extra sailings on 3 September, the OSBORNE CASTLE has been advertised for sale with prompt delivery.

CHANNEL ISLANDS
British Rail The SARNIA made her last "regular" sailing to the Islands on 4 September. Her final excursion was a charter to Guernsey on 10 September. The MAID OF KENT may make some Guernsey excursions next year. The Portsmouth service which commences on. 31 October has five sailings a week, from Mondays to Fridays, leaving the Islands in the morning and returning overnight. Weymouth sailings will continue thrice weekly this winter.
Isle of Sark Shipping Co The ILE DE SERK was off service from 3 to 12 August after losing her propeller.
Condor The CONDOR 5 returned to service on 15 August after being out of action for nearly four weeks.
Vedettes Blanches The BELLE DE DINARD finished her season at the end of September, leaving her traffic to the SOLIDOR.

WEST OF ENGLAND
Dart Pleasure Craft The MY QUEEN from Plymouth joined the fleet this summer. Built in 1929 as the GONDOLIER QUEEN for service from Poole, she ran in London and from Torquay before going to Plymouth.
Isles of Scilly Steamship Co The SCILLONIAN III begins the winter schedule on 11 October, sailing from Penzance on TThS and from St Mary's on MWF. The DEVONIA is to be chartered to cover the new ship's overhaul.

BRISTOL CHANNEL
P & A Campbell The DEVONIA is spending the winter at Dartmouth, apart from a spell relieving the SCILLONIAN III this autumn. There appears to have been no decision on the Company's plans for 1978.

IRISH SEA
Isle of Man Steam Packet Co The remaining summer vessels made their last trips of the season as follows: MONA'S ISLE, 7 Sept; MANXMAN, 13 Sept; MANX MAID, 18 Sept; BEN-MY-CHREE, 25 Sept. The first three joined the SNAEFELL at Birkenhead. The BEN-MY-CHREE sailed up the Ship Canal to Manchester on 26 September for an overhaul which will include the fitting of a bow thruster.

TRIP OUT

November 1977

The cheaper cross-channel day trips on offer this winter, and the proposals for continental trips to Deal Pier, suggest that we may at last be about to benefit from a type of excursion vessel until now largely confined to Germany - the so-called buttership. These are excursion ships whose main raison d'être is the sale on board of duty-free goods, including butter. Around the German coast, these trips fall into three categories: day trips to Helgoland, the North Sea island which although part of West Germany has a "tax-free" status; all-day non-landing cruises outside territorial waters; shorter trips calling at a Danish or Dutch port (the foreign call is necessary to qualify for the duty-free allowance but often lasts for just a few minutes). Fares on trips in the last two categories are often nominal, the operators making their profits from sales on board. Around fifty ships sail from German ports on these trips. Many of them are relatively small but there are about a dozen of between 500 and 1000 gross tons, and a further eight of over 1000 tons. All are pure excursion vessels with no accommodation for vehicles and the larger ones are substantial sea-going ships.

There ought to be scope for development of this sort of trade on the English Channel. Perhaps a British buttership might seem a slightly sordid idea, representing the final death of the romance of a sea trip, but this does not seem to be the case with the German ships. Many of them are well-designed with good accommodation, including restaurants and bars as well as the duty-free shops, and ample deck space. Is it really too much to hope that some enterprising operator in this country will try to copy the success of the German operators ?

Geoffrey Hamer

NORTH EAST

British Rail denied in early October that the EDITH would replace the LINCOLN CASTLE. They planned to use the EDITH on the Humber for six weeks starting this month, while the FARRINGFORD has "major repairs", but as the EDITH will be needed on the Thames, the LINCOLN CASTLE will operate the service alone during the FARRINGFORD's absence.

THAMES

Summer services in London finished on 30 October but winter services are more extensive than previous years'. The Westminster boats are running every half hour to Tower and Greenwich, as last winter; from Charing Cross there is a similar service to Tower and a more limited Greenwich service; Tower-based vessels are running to Westminster and HMS BELFAST; an innovation is a limited service from Westminster upriver to Kew - two boats are each making two round trips daily.

British Rail Following objections from the DoT and the ferry crews, BR has decided not to use the ADRIAN and HUMPHREY GILBERTs on the Tilbury crossing. Both vessels, acquired and converted at a total cost of £44 000, will be sold and the service will continue to be maintained by the CATHERINE and EDITH.

R J Maynard, Westminster The COCKNEY SPARROW is one of the boats running public trips from Charing Cross this winter. She sails every evening from Westminster to a new landing stage serving the 'Downtown Theatre Restaurant' near the Surrey Docks.

D & T Scenics, Reading A new steel-hulled vessel has been ordered for next season, replacing the SCENIC LADY which is believed to have been sold, and the PRIDE OF TEST and SCENIC I which are on the market.

C & P Walker Radcot, began running the converted narrow boat BATTERSEA (built 1936), on charter trips last summer. Her base at Radcot Bridge is further upstream than any other passenger boat's.

SOUTH COAST

British Rail There was a small fire aboard the SHANKLIN at Portsmouth on 18 October. Damage was not serious but she was replaced by the SOUTHSEA. A barman was later charged with starting the fire.

Boscombe Taurus Yacht Services The BOSCOMBE QUEEN and ISLAND QUEEN finished their season on 30 September.

Croson The BOURNEMOUTH BELLE finished on 29 September, followed by the POOLE BELLE on 6 October; the DORSET BELLE was due to continue till 30 October. Bournemouth Council has agreed in principle to rebuild the pier at a cost of £1 million.

CHANNEL ISLANDS

British Rail All CI sailings were suspended after 31 October by a strike over the crews' pay for the Portsmouth route which was due to be opened by the EARL GODWIN. After three days, BR reached agreement with the seamen but the officers continued their strike, leaving both the CALEDONIAN PRINCESS and EARL GODWIN idle. Fares on the Weymouth route were increased from 31 October, the single fare becoming £10.80 (a rise of £1.20); the Portsmouth single fare will be £12.40.

WEST OF ENGLAND

Isles of Scilly Steamship Co The DEVONIA is not, after all, to be chartered and there will be no passenger service while the SCILLONIAN III is off for refit this month.

BRISTOL CHANNEL

P & A Campbell The BALMORAL missed many sailings in late September because of gales but the Isles of Scilly trip on 14-17 October was completed in excellent weather. She then sailed to Southampton for the charter on the 22nd towards Portland, which attracted some 250 passengers. Only about 50 had booked for the 'Piers' weekend in Bournemouth, so the Sunday trip to Eastbourne was cancelled and the BALMORAL returned to Dartmouth for the winter. The Bournemouth press described her appearance as "rusty and bedraggled", contrasting with the "gleaming paintwork" mentioned in the leaflet for the weekend trip. It seems that the Company hopes to run the BALMORAL on the Thames next year, with the DEVONIA as expected on the Bristol Channel.

 © G P Hamer 6 November 1977

TRIP OUT

December 1977

The miserable 1977 season is fortunately now just a memory. There is little doubt that most excursion operators have done badly, though few passenger totals are ever published by firms in this business. Even the little information that is released can easily mislead - passenger figures for Clyde steamers, for example, are apparently calculated by counting the number of single journeys, with a non-landing cruise counting as two journeys. Perhaps no information at all is better than such curiously contrived figures.

Geoffrey Hamer

NORTH EAST

British Rail The FARRINGFORD arrived at Immingham for refit on 14 November, having completed service on the 12th. She is not due to return to service till the end of the year. Humberside County Council seems unlikely to attempt to continue a ferry service after the Bridge opens; annual losses have been estimated at £150 000 for a passenger-only service or over £200 000 for a continuation of the present service.

Hill's Boatyard, York, have offered for sale their three smallest launches, the PRINCESSes ELIZABETH, KATHARINE and MARY. A further new boat has been ordered to replace them.

THAMES

British Rail The ADRIAN and HUMPHREY GILBERTs have been offered for sale with a closing date for tenders of 15 December. Both have been re-engined and are said to have Class V certificates for 100 passengers, 50 less than their capacities at Dartmouth.

Sargent Bros, Woolwich The ENCHANTÉ which is being built by Conyer Marine has been delayed, but is due to enter service on charter trips this month.

Catamaran Cruisers have been using the ABERCORN on the Westminster to Greenwich service since mid-October instead of the VICEROY and YARMOUTH BELLE which have been under the same ownership as the Catamaran business since last winter. The VALULLA continues to offer a public luncheon cruise from Westminster on Saturdays and Sundays - fare £4.40 for 2 hours with a 3-course lunch.

Others Services from Charing Cross were suspended after the first week of November and the pier pontoon was removed for refit. From Westminster, Kew sailings have been at weekends only since mid-November; the HENLEY is the mainstay of the service with the FORDSON offering extra trips on fine days. The six boats on the Westminster-Tower-Greenwich service in early December are the ABERCORN, ELEANOR ROSE, GOLDEN SALAMANDER, GREENWICH BELLE, TIDEWAY and WITHEYCOMBE; apart from the first-named, all were built in the 1970's.

SOUTH COAST

Red Funnel Services have been disrupted by strikes and were suspended completely on several days in November.

CHANNEL ISLANDS

British Rail Following a settlement of the strike, services were resumed on 8 November when the EARL GODWIN opened the Portsmouth route.

Condor As expected, services between Guernsey, Jersey and St-Malo continue throughout this winter for the first time.

Vedettes Blanches The car ferry SOLIDOR sails this month on Monday and Thursday afternoons from St-Malo and returns from St Helier the following morning. The service continues on a twice-weekly basis in the new year.

BRISTOL CHANNEL

P & A Campbell Before her season on the Thames, the BALMORAL is expected to be chartered by Waverley Travel on 14 May for a trip from Portsmouth to Eastbourne. The liner KUNGSHOLM will be calling at Avonmouth, Llandudno and Douglas in June on a cruise from New York; Campbell ships acted as tenders for similar calls between 1964 and 1975.

MIDLAND WATERWAYS

Silvery Ouse Pleasure Craft, Bedford The electric launch SILVER CREST has been offered for sale for £5950. The short stretch of the River Ouse on which she operates will shortly be linked to the Fenland waterways when the rebuilding of derelict locks downstream from Bedford is completed.

MISCELLANY

LA DAME DE SERK has now spent nearly 2½ years in St Katharine's Dock, London, having previously operated as a passenger vessel from Brest, Torquay and Guernsey. She has recently been advertised again for sale or charter, but further passenger work is most unlikely.

 © G P Hamer 4 December 1977

TRIP OUT

January 1978

NORTH EAST

British Rail The FARRINGFORD was still undergoing her extended refit at Immingham in early January while the LINCOLN CASTLE maintained the Humber service alone.

Hill's Boatyard, York The new boat to replace the launches offered for sale late last year is being built by John Harker (Shipyards) Ltd at Knottingley.

THAMES

Amongst vessels advertising public cruises in London on New Year's Eve were the SWANAGE QUEEN (fare £3.25), TIDEWAY (£12 including drinks) and SILVER BARRACUDA (£25 with dinner and drinks).

Catamaran Cruisers have acquired Thames Launches' VISCOUNTESS which has now taken the ABERCORN's place on the winter Greenwich service. She seems likely to run on the Westminster-Greenwich service next - summer in place of the YARMOUTH BELLE.

STRAITS OF DOVER and ENGLISH CHANNEL

The cheap excursions to France being offered by British Rail continue till 12 March. The fare is £5.50 from Newhaven to Dieppe or £5 across the Straits of Dover. The Olau-Line is offering return trips from Sheerness to Vlissingen at various fares from £7.

SOUTH COAST

Bournemouth Council has refused an application by the Paddle Steamer Preservation Society to operate a service from Bournemouth Pier. It is not clear what vessel could have been used for such a service.

CHANNEL ISLANDS

British Rail Next season, the two-ship service from Weymouth operates from 20 March to 28 October. The full summer service, with crossings every night from both Portsmouth and Weymouth and every day from Weymouth, runs from 26 May to 30 September.

Vedettes Blanches The SOLIDOR makes a round trip from Saint-Malo to Jersey on nine dates this month (2, 3, 6, 9, 10, 14, 28, 30 and 31 January); she is presumably off for refit between the 14th and 28th.

WEST OF ENGLAND

B Curtin, Plymouth, has offered the 100-passenger QUEEN OF THE SEA for sale.

Isles of Scilly Steamship Co The summer service is similar to previous years'; sailings are daily (except Sundays) from 20 March to 9 October, with two round trips on Saturdays from 20 May to 2 September. The crossing time is advertised as 2½ hours, a reduction of 15 minutes, but fares have been increased; a single or day return is now £7.

BRISTOL CHANNEL

P & A Campbell The DEVONIA sailed to Kyle of Lochalsh in December, having been chartered, apparently for six months, for work in connection with the Chevron oil production platform being fitted out in the Inner Sound of Raasay. Bristol Channel sailings next season will be similar to last year's but it is not clear which ship will be used. The Company has still not made a decision on whether it will run a Thames service again. Coupon books giving £4-worth of travel on the Bristol Channel for a cost of £3 are on sale as usual this month.

IRISH SEA

Isle of Man Steam Packet Co The SNAEFELL has been withdrawn following the discovery last month that she needs expensive repairs. Her final sailings were on 29 August and she has been laid up in Bidston Dock at Birkenhead since. Her withdrawal has resulted in minor amendments to next summer's Isle of Man schedules but there have been no details of the effect on the Liverpool-Llandudno excursions which had been provisionally advertised for next season despite poor loadings in recent years. The BEN-MY-CHREE left the Manchester Ship Canal on 21 December following the completion of her refit. The KING ORRY, laid up at or near Glasson Dock since her sale in 1975, has been resold for breaking up; she was towed to the Medway by the tug AFON WEN and reached Queenborough on 21 December.

Manx Line has been formed to run a Heysham-Douglas vehicle ferry service. On 22 December, Aznar Line's MONTE CASTILLO carried out berthing trials at Douglas and it seems that she could be purchased or chartered for the service which is due to start in June. The MONTE CASTILLO is currently on a Liverpool-Canaries cargo service but can carry 750 passengers in summer.

MISCELLANY

The WINGFIELD CASTLE (or BRIGHTON BELLE) has been owned by a Mr H G Gandesha since he took her in "exchange" for the MEDINA which is now at the Brighton Marina. The paddler has remained in the Royal Albert Dock Basin, London, and is due to be sold again soon.

The Isle of Wight paddler RYDE QUEEN, damaged by fire last summer, is being refitted to reopen as a night club next summer.

TRIP OUT

February 1978

The gales of last month have further reduced the number of seaside piers, while most of those left standing are in a vulnerable state after years of minimal maintenance. Always fragile structures, the seaside piers' declining popularity parallels the fate of the large coastal excursion ship. Further reductions in the number of piers seem inevitable. Only much greater use can save them and there is little chance of this arising from excursion vessels, for the traditional piers are unsuited to today's services. Expanding trades such as evening charter trips from big cities have little use for exposed seaside piers. The older pier-owning resorts of the south and east coasts of England have fallen out of favour with holidaymakers who prefer the more scenic areas of the British Isles. Any piers that remain in years to come must defy not only the weather but the changing social patterns of the tourist industry.

Geoffrey Hamer

NORTH EAST

British Rail (Humber) The FARRINGFORD left Immingham on 24 January after her extended refit and returned to service with the LINCOLN CASTLE which had maintained the service alone for over ten weeks. The LINCOLN CASTLE made a total of 16 cruises in 1977, on weekday evenings and Sundays, carrying a total of 7059 passengers.

THAMES

Most of Margate Pier was destroyed in gales on 11/12 January. The last large vessel to call was the QUEEN OF THE ISLES in 1969 but the local NEW GOLDEN SPRAY used it till its closure three years ago. Former steamer piers at Clacton, Herne Bay and Walton were also damaged by the gales.

Waverley Steam Navigation Co Arrangements are being made for the WAVERLEY to spend the first half of May on the Thames and the Solent. Details should be available this month from the London agents, Grey-Green Travel, though whether the sailings can take place must depend on the company's precarious financial position.

Abingdon Marine Co, Newbridge The narrowboat MAYBUSH has been offered for sale after three years on the upper Thames.

SOUTH COAST

Red Funnel The landing stages at both East and West Cowes were damaged by storms on 11 January.

Croson The POOLE BELLE was chartered by Poole Yacht Club on Boxing Day, making a very rare use of her winter Class V certificate.

CHANNEL ISLANDS

British Rail The EARL WILLIAM left Holyhead on 12 January and carried out berthing trials at Guernsey on the 13th. Generator trouble off Jersey led to the cancellation of trials there and she sailed to Portsmouth, taking over the service on the evening of the 16th. The EARL GODWIN sailed from Portsmouth to Weymouth to replace the CALEDONIAN PRINCESS which went to Newhaven.

Vedettes Blanches The SOLIDOR sails on most days in February and March, though departure times vary from day to day.
Isle of Sark Shipping Co This may be the last year of the ILE DE SERK as she is due for a major survey.
Service Maritime, Carteret LES DEUX LEOPARDS is to be replaced by a catamaran next season.
Hovercross After three seasons running HM2 hovercraft between Carteret. and Gorey, the firm is to operate a conventional passenger vessel next season.

WEST OF ENGLAND
Green Boats, Falmouth The business, run by R M Rogers, has been advertised for sale with the two boats, SKYLARK II and TEMPTRESS, for £21 000.
A J G England, Padstow, has offered his business for sale. The 170-passenger TRI STAR, which is apparently being re-engined after only six seasons, runs with the small speedboat JAWS. The asking price is £125 000 which seems rather high.
Others The Salcombe harbourmaster has ordered the paddler COMPTON CASTLE to be removed from her berth at Kingsbridge by 1 April because of doubts over her safety. Her current owners are from Poole and are the latest in a succession of owners to promise to improve her deteriorating condition - they claim she could be restored to passenger service.

BRISTOL CHANNEL
P & A Campbell The DEVONIA damaged her rudder and starboard propeller in an accident on 8 January shortly after her Chevron charter had commenced. She was towed to Greenock, arriving on 18 January and was drydocked for repairs by Lamont's on the following day; she was still there at the end of the month. The BALMORAL is expected to spend the whole season on the Bristol Channel and further charter work is being sought for the DEVONIA, so a return to the Thames is now unlikely. Amongst early season charters is a trip from Penarth, Weston and Ilfracombe to Bideford on 6 May and a Bideford-Lundy trip on 13 May (replacing a trip cancelled by gales on 1 October last year).

NORTH WALES AND NORTH WEST
Merseyside PTE The ROYAL IRIS was drydocked at Birkenhead for about two weeks in January for her annual survey.
Misc The pier at Menai Bridge is to be repaired at a cost of £160 000. Its closure last year prevented the Arfon Borough Council's NANTLYS from running trips to Bangor and Beaumaris.

IRISH SEA
Isle of Man Steam Packet Co The MANX MAID was drydocked at Birkenhead for two weeks from 6 January. The Steam Packet Co's profit after tax for 1977 was £439 000, compared with £426 000 in 1976 - a very good result considering the poor weather of last summer. The SNAEFELL has been advertised for sale and is expected to go for scrap. The KING ORRY was towed up the Medway on 11 January to Rochester where she is to be broken up by M Lynch & Son. The rival Manx Line have still to announce details of their ship and schedules.

TRIP OUT

March 1978

NORTH EAST

Tyne & Wear PTE The South Shields landing stage pontoon sank early on 8 February and the ferry service was suspended.

British Rail (Humber) The LINCOLN CASTLE was due to be off service for refit from 13 February to 6 March.

White Rose Cruises, York Owned by a Mr L Howard, the newly-built 65-passenger narrow boat JOHN H began trips on the River Ouse last year. She is being joined this year by a 60-passenger launch named TINA H.

Alan Oliver Oruises), Doncaster, has acquired the WYRE LADY to run with the narrow boat ACHILLES. Originally the Clyde vessel ASHTON, she has been laid up since running unsuccessfully on the River Severn in 1976. The smaller ATHENE, which ran at Doncaster last season, has returned to her owners, Robinson's of Dewsbury.

EAST ANGLIA

J N Blake, Norwich The REGAL LADY will be making calls at Brundall during her cruises this year; BR is offering day trips incorporating a Norwich-Brundall trip from London on Tuesdays and Sundays from 28 May to 10 September.

Waveney River Tours The WAVENEY PRINCESS, a 100-passenger saloon boat, was completed by Impala Marine at Twickenham last autumn and will replace THE PRINCE this summer. She is similar to a number of recent Impala buildings, including the ANNE OF ETIVE and DUKE OF YORK.

THAMES

Mobird Trading Co will not be offering trips to Southend this year. The CAPTAIN JAMES COOK, which sailed from Gravesend in 1976 and from Tilbury last year, has joined the fleet of Thames Pleasure Craft Ltd at Tower Pier.

Waverley Steam Navigation Co Bookings are being taken for the WAVERLEY's proposed Thames sailings between 30 April and 7 May. Public trips include sailings from Tower Pier and Greenwich to Southend and cruise (30 April) and to Southend, Clacton and cruise (1 May), Southend to Clacton, Deal and cruise (6 May) and Clacton to Deal (7 May); there are also trips from Gravesend and Tilbury.

SOUTH COAST

Waverley Steam Navigation Co Booking agents for sailings from Southampton round the Isle of Wight to Bournemouth (13 May) and to Worthing (14 May) are Waverley Travel. These trips are apparently preceded by an excursion from Hastings and Eastbourne to Ryde.

CHANNEL ISLANDS

British Rail The EARL GODWIN began her refit at Immingham on 6 February.

WEST OF ENGLAND

K T Bridge, Plymouth, is the new owner of the SCOMBER. Formerly the River Dart Steamboat Co's SEYMOUR CASTLE, she has been owned by naturalist Tony Soper since 1972 and offered bird-watching cruises on the Tamar and Dart, but was apparently laid up last season.

BRISTOL CHANNEL

P & A Campbell The DEVONIA left Greenock on 2 February, having completed her repairs, and sailed to Loch Kishorn to resume her Chevron charter. The BALMORAL was in dry dock at Penzance in February. At Easter, the BALMORAL sails from Swansea to Ilfracombe (continuing to Lundy on. Fri, Sun and Tue) from 24 to 29 March, except on Easter Monday when she sails from Penarth and Weston to Ilfracombe. Up-channel sailings continue spasmodically in April. The main change in the summer season is the greatly increased number of trips direct from Penarth to Ilfracombe, giving fewer calls at Weston where the survival of the Birnbeck Pier as a calling point after 1978 is in any case very doubtful. Fares have been increased by relatively modest amounts: Ilfracombe-Lundy rises from £4.50 to £4.90. The Company has advertised for a launch to carry at least 40 passengers for tendering at Lundy; the present launches are the DEVONIA and LADY MOYRA.

MIDLAND WATERWAYS

Leisure Line, Birmingham, have taken over the business though not the vessels of Brummagem Trip Boats. The BRITANNIA and EUROPE are offering public trips this summer as well as charters. Of the former Brummagem fleet, the EUPHRATES PACKET became the PORT-ABELLA PACKET in London last summer, while the BRUMMAGEM FLY has been returned to her owners, the British Waterways Board.

Trent Valley Cruises The business and the narrow boat FLAMINGO have been taken over by K F Gracie from the previous owner G Rowe.

IRISH SEA

Isle of Man Steam Packet Co The MANX MAID returned to service on 16 February, replacing. the MONA'S QUEEN which sailed to Glasgow for refit. The first of the passenger steamers to emerge, the MONA'S ISLE, entered drydock at Birkenhead in mid-February. Special excursions are scheduled from Douglas to Holyhead (29 May), Heysham (3 July) and Workington (17 August) with a connecting coach tour on the mainland in each case.

Manx Line The MONTE CASTILLO (1976, 2753 grt) has been acquired from Aznar for £5 million, which price includes the fitting of a bow door and a credit arrangement. She will be renamed MANX VIKING and will begin twice-daily sailings from Heysham on 1 June, taking 3 hrs 15 mins (4 hours by night) at a single fare of £6.50 (£7.50 at weekends) - less than the Steam Packet Co's rate. Day excursions will be possible from Heysham, with some 3½ hours ashore except on Saturdays.

www.trip-out.co.uk © G P Hamer 6 March 1978

TRIP OUT

April 1978

NORTH EAST

British Rail (Humber) The LINCOLN CASTLE has been withdrawn following the discovery of boiler defects during her annual dry docking in Hull. A new boiler, it was claimed, would cost £150 000 and take nine months to construct. The 'CASTLE, England's last paddle steamer, made her final crossings in February. The FARRINGFORD will continue to maintain the Humber ferry service.

THAMES

Services between Westminster, Tower and Greenwich reverted to summer schedules before Easter. Westminster-Kew sailings were resumed, last winter's service by the HENLEY having petered out in January.

Waverley Steam Navigation Co The WAVERLEY will be sailing in the Thames area between 26 April and 8 May. Weekend trips are on 29 April (Tower-Southend-cruise and return), 30 April (Tower-Greenwich -Southend-cruise and return), 1 May (Greenwich-Southend-Clacton-cruise and return), 6 May (Tilbury-Southend-Clacton-Deal-cruise-Deal-Clacton-Southend-Clacton) and 7 May (Clacton-Deal-Clacton-Deal). The last two are charters by a Colchester travel agency, but tickets for all these trips seem to be available from Grey-Green Travel (see previous issues).

Windsor Boats (Arthur Jacobs Ltd) have taken over Golding Bros' business; THE JOHN ANDREW has joined the Jacobs fleet as the WINDSOR SCEPTRE.

SOUTH COAST

Waverley Steam Navigation Co The WAVERLEY begins her southern sailings at Newhaven on 21 April and finishes at Poole on 16 May. Weekend trips are on 22 April (Newhaven-cruise off Ventnor), 23 April (Newhaven-Worthing-Ryde-Newhaven), 13 May (Southampton-Portsmouth-Ryde-round the IoW-Bournemouth-cruise and return via the Solent) and 14 May (Southampton-Southsea-Ryde-Worthing-cruise and return). Booking agent. for Sussex sailings is Southdown. The WAVERLEY will be carrying up to 12 passengers on her voyages between the Clyde and South Coast at a single fare of £100 including meals - details from the Company in Glasgow.

Boscombe Taurus Yacht Services It is not clear whether the firm will operate this season since bills for using (and damaging) Boscombe Pier last season have not been paid and the company would appear to be in financial trouble. The BOSCOMBE QUEEN has been advertised for sale for £60 000.

Others Brownsea Island reopened for the season on 24 March and the usual trips by Harveys, North Haven Ferries and Wills recommenced.

CHANNEL ISLANDS

British Rail The CALEDONIAN PRINCESS returned to the Weymouth service on 6 February, replacing the EARL GODWIN which has since been strike-bound in dry dock at Immingham. The NORMANNIA joined her from 20 to 31 March, after which Townsend Thoresen's VIKING VICTORY is being chartered for one month. The EARL WILLIAM made an

extra trip from Weymouth on Easter Saturday in between Portsmouth sailings. Day excursions from Weymouth to Guernsey will be offered on Sundays in June and September by the MAID OF KENT.

Service Maritime, Carteret LES TROIS LEOPARDS entered service at Easter and will be joined this summer by the PEGASUS, a 'Westamaran' similar to the BELLE DE DINARD and HIGHLAND SEABIRD. The PEGASUS will take the Carteret-Guernsey trips instead of LES DEUX LEOPARDS.

WEST OF ENGLAND

Isles of Scilly Steamship Co At least four overnight rail excursions from or via London are connecting with the SCILLONIAN III this year - on 6 May and 23 Sep (BR London Midland Region), 20 May (LNER Society) and 7 October (M&GNJR Society); write for details and booking addresses.

BRISTOL CHANNEL

P & A Campbell The BALMORAL returned to service on 24 March looking reasonably smart and apparently having passed her 5-year survey. No structural changes have been made to the ship, but catering standards seem to be higher as the contractor of the past 16 years has been replaced. Most sailings over Easter were cancelled by the weather. Amongst charters this month is an educational trip to Sharpness on the 18th - the first Campbell call since the War.

NORTH WEST

Merseyside PTE The OVERCHURCH's Manchester Ship Canal cruises are on 27-28 May, 22-23 July and 2-3 September, sailing from Liverpool on Saturdays and from Manchester on Sundays. The single fare for the 7-hour trip is £4.65; write to Co-op Travel.

National Trust An appeal for £95 000 has been launched to restore the steamer GONDOLA to service on Lake Coniston. Built in 1859 for the Furness Railway, she was withdrawn by the LMS in 1940 and subsequently used as a houseboat before partly sinking. If the project succeeds, she could return to service in 1980.

IRISH SEA

Isle of Man Steam Packet Co Liverpool-Llandudno excursions are scheduled for 28 May, 8, 15, 18, 22, 25, 29 June, 2, 6, 9, 13, 23, 25, 27, 30 July, 1, 10, 13, 15, 20, 22, 24, 27, 31 August and 3 September. The MONA'S QUEEN left Glasgow after refit on 1 March and, after a spell at Birkenhead, re-entered service at Easter, joining the LADY OF MANN and MANX MAID. The LADY' came off service for refit on 27 March. The MANXMAN was dry docked at Liverpool in late March. The SNAEFELL has reportedly been sold for scrap.

Manx Line The MONTE CASTILLO completed her Canaries service at Liverpool on 20 March and then sailed via Douglas and Heysham to Leith to begin conversion.

MISCELLANY

The National Trust's 1977 visiting figures for its islands are: Brownsea 99 000 (107 000 in 1976), Farne 32 000 (34 000) and Lundy - under 20 000 (21 000).

TRIP OUT

May 1978

She's here! The world's last sea-going paddle steamer is sailing in the South of England. Despite all the confusion caused by doubts over the financial wisdom of the venture and the lack of advance publicity, many of the trips have been well supported. There have been no major mishaps and, although not as immaculate as last year, the WAVERLEY still looks smarter than many other passenger ships. She is, furthermore, offering trips which have not been available for many years. In some cases, they are trips of negligible scenic interest which barely deserve a revival, but can we dare to hope that the sight of a real pleasure steamer cruising along the English coast will rekindle some interest somewhere? Or is the visit really a final fling before day cruises along the coast fade completely into history? Anyway, we must enjoy it while it lasts.

Geoffrey Hamer

NORTH EAST

British Rail (Humber) The future ownership of the LINCOLN CASTLE is still in doubt with possible purchase being debated by Humberside County Council. The National Railway Museum at York has also expressed an interest in purchase, though they would require someone else to maintain her.

THAMES

Waverley Steam Navigation Co See 'South Coast'

Meridian Line Cruises The SWANAGE QUEEN is making a public cruise to Southend on 18 June, leaving Greenwich at 1000 and returning at 2100. The fare is £4 and advance booking is advised.

Thames Launches The veteran YARMOUTH BELLE is running from Charing Cross to Greenwich, having been exchanged with Jackson Bros (River Services) for the VISCOUNTESS which is now running from Westminster to Greenwich. Also sailing from Charing Cross this season is the TIDEWAY VENTURE, formerly at Westminster.

Baroltone Ltd, Hampton Court, has been formed to operate the PRIDE OF TEST, acquired from D & T Scenic's of Reading. She is running weekend trips between Hampton Court and Walton - a stretch of river not covered by regular trips since 1974.

Others Short trips from Chatham Dockyard on the Medway will be offered on 28 and 29 May during the 'Navy Days'.

SOUTH COAST

Waverley Steam Navigation Co The WAVERLEY left Glasgow on 15 April and reached Newhaven on the 18th, calling en route at Milford for fuel. Trips started with an evening cruise from Newhaven on 21 April when the ship carried a capacity crowd. Since then, she has called at Ryde, Worthing, Hastings, Deal, Sheerness, Tilbury, Tower, Greenwich, Southend and Clacton. Further scheduled calling points are Eastbourne, Southsea, Southampton, Bournemouth and Poole.

Blue Funnel Cruises The VENUS has been sold and is now on the Thames. She was the last of the Gosport ferries to run in steam, being acquired by Blue Funnel in 1968 and converted to diesel two years later. She was presumably sold because she commanded a higher price than the older members of the fleet.

British Rail The CENRED was in dry dock in London in late April, presumably having her new upper car deck fitted.
Croson The POOLE BELLE was due to open the season on 30 April with twice-daily Dorset Lakes cruises. Reduced fares operate till 27 May. The BOURNEMOUTH BELLE was slipped on 18 April, followed by the DORSET BELLE on the 25th.
Boscombe Taurus Yacht Services seem unlikely to operate again. Bournemouth Council has invited tenders for the operating rights from Boscombe Pier.

CHANNEL ISLANDS

British Rail The VIKING VICTORY began her charter on 3 April, sailing with the Townsend Thoresen name painted out and BR funnel colours. The CALEDONIAN PRINCESS went for overhaul after sailing on 10 April, being replaced by the NORMANNIA and CAESAREA; from the 17th, no passengers were carried on the NORMANNIA, all motorists going on the CAESAREA. The CALEDONIAN PRINCESS resumed with the annual licensed victuallers' charter excursion from Weymouth on 30 April and replaced the VIKING VICTORY on 1 May. Work on the EARL GODWIN at Immingham resumed on 24 April and she is due to replace the CAESAREA and NORMANNIA on 5 May.
Vedettes Blanches The SOLIDOR ran aground outside St-Malo on 7 April and was dry docked for repair. Since 22 April, she has been replaced by the chartered NORDLICHT (1973, 999 grt) of Emden. This summer, the BELLE DE JERSEY is sailing daily from Granville to Jersey, all St-Malo traffic being handled by the BELLE DE DINARD and SOLIDOR.
Hovercross The vessel acquired to replace the firm's hovercraft is the PECONIC QUEEN, a 100-ft former angling vessel from New York. She is being refitted by Rank Marine at Hamble to carry 185 passengers at 25 knots and is due to enter service between Gorey and Carteret this month.

BRISTOL CHANNEL

P & A Campbell The DEVONIA's Scottish charter should now be over, but there is no news of her future activities; a Thames excursion service is still said to be unlikely.

MISCELLANY

Department of Trade survey fees for passenger vessels are being increased by 100% from 22 May in an effort to recover the full cost of carrying out this work.

A call off Llandudno by the liner KUNGSHOLM in mid-June has been switched to Holyhead, presumably because no tender was available for Llandudno; the ship's own launches can be used to put passengers ashore at Holyhead.

 © G P Hamer 4 May 1978

TRIP OUT

June 1978

THAMES

Greenwich Pleasure Craft are the new operators of the VENUS from Southampton.

J P T Coakley, Tower Pier The Thames Ship Society's annual charter of the VAROS from Tower, Greenwich and Tilbury to Southend is on 16 July. Fare £2.75 for non-members.

D & T Scenic's, Reading The new steel-hulled saloon boat CAVERSHAM LADY was built by Hancock and Lane at Daventry. She replaces all three wooden launches.

B Wells, Strood, has acquired the NEW GOLDEN SPRAY from M J Pett of Ramsgate. She will offer thrice-daily 1½-hour cruises from Strood Pier, becoming the Medway's first excursion vessel since the GOLDEN CORMORANT in 1974-75.

SOUTH COAST

Waverley Steam Navigation Co The WAVERLEY completed her south coast programme with many capacity loads. One extra pier to receive a visit was Sandown on 12 May. She sailed to Stranraer after her final cruise from Poole on 16 May. Her arrival date at Newhaven was 17 April, not as given in the last issue.

Red Funnel The OSBORNE CASTLE has been sold and left Southampton on 3 May for Canada. She had been spare for the past two years, though she ran additional ferry services last summer.

General Estates Co has offered £175 000 for the SOUTHSEA QUEEN and she seems likely to replace the HOTSPUR II shortly; the SOUTHSEA QUEEN cost around £130 000 when built in 1974. A catamaran was ordered from a local Hythe firm last autumn but the builders went bankrupt, hence the search for a second-hand ferry.

Boscombe Taurus Yacht Services The ISLAND QUEEN has apparently been returned to her former owners, M E & J S Cutler. Four firms, including Croson, have tendered for the operating rights from Boscombe. A decision is to be made on 2 June.

Croson The POOLE BELLE carried out berthing trials at Boscombe in April: The other two vessels were due in service on 28 May when the full summer programme commenced. A new feature is a cruise from Yarmouth to the Needles on Sundays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays. The firm's licence to run from Bournemouth Pier has been renewed for three years from 1 March 1978.

CHANNEL ISLAND$

British Rail The EARL GODWIN completed her refit at Immingham and left for Weymouth on 6 May.

Isle of Sark Shipping Co is this year providing tenders for the Condor hydrofoils at Sark. The SKYLARK (owned by Condor) and the TERESA OF SARK are being used.

WEST OF ENGLAND

Exeter Maritime Museum The DUCHESS is running from 29 May to 15 September but the cruise the full length of the Canal is on Mondays, Wednesdays and Thursdays only; on Saturdays and Sundays, she makes afternoon and evening trips from Countess Wear swing bridge to Turf. The high tolls for using the Canal are blamed for this reduced schedule.

Western Lady Ferry Service The boats are using the Haldon Pier at Torquay this year as the Princess Pier is under repair.
K T Bridge, Plymouth The SCOMBER, acquired late last year, is being renamed SOUTHERN COMFORT OF PLYMSTOCK.
P A Lochrie, Falmouth The REBECCA, owned by Colin Warren Engineering Ltd but operated from the Prince of Wales Pier by Mr Lochrie, has been offered for sale for £15 000.
Flushing Ferry The business, including the MIRANDA II, has been advertised for sale for £7500.
Others The ps COMPTON CASTLE has been sold to a Mr Clayton of Looe and was towed from Kingsbridge, where she has lain for 13 years, to Looe on 19 May. Her new owner intends spending up to £70 000 on a refit and hopes eventually to run her on the River Dart.

BRISTOL CHANNEL
P & A Campbell The DEVONIA arrived in Bristol on 8 May, having completed her Scottish charter.

MIDLAND WATERWAYS
Sherwood Line, Nottingham The Coastal Cruising Association is chartering the TAMAR BELLE on 29 July for a single trip from Newark to Nottingham.

IRISH SEA
Isle of Man Steam Packet Co The BEN-MY-CHREE returned to service on 16 May. The LADY OF MANN was in Manchester from 28 March to 22 May for her refit and re-entered service on 24 May. The MONA'S ISLE was in service on 26 May and the MANXMAN was due to start on the following day. On 22 May, the MONA'S QUEEN had a schools charter from Liverpool to Douglas and on the following day took a similar excursion to Douglas from Holyhead.
Manx Line The firm's Douglas link-span will be late and the MANX VIKING's refit has been delayed by a strike at Leith, so the start of the service has been put back by one month to 1 July. The new company thus misses the traffic to the TT races on 3-9 June.

MISCELLANY
The group of "anonymous businessmen" who bought the derelict paddler MEDWAY QUEEN last year still hope to take her back to the Medway. Her owners include a Mr Ravenscroft of Chattenden, Kent.

 © G P Hamer 31 May 1978

TRIP OUT

July 1978

NORTH EAST

British Rail (Humber) The National Railway Museum at York is still interested in purchasing the LINCOLN CASTLE, providing arrangements can be made to berth and maintain her.

NORTH SEA

North Sea Ferries The NORLAND is to make a New Year's Eve cruise from Hull, leaving at 1800 and returning at 1100 on 1 January.

THAMES

British Rail One of the two River Dart ferries acquired for the Tilbury ferry remains unsold. Tenders have been invited for it this month.

Meridian Line Cruises The SWANAGE QUEEN is making a further Greenwich-Southend day trip on Tuesday **15** August.

Greenwich Pleasure Craft The latest addition to the fleet is the saloon boat ELTHAM, completed recently at the owners' Greenwich yard. Only charter trips are operated.

Thompson's Launches, Westminster After a refit lasting some 18 months, the VISCOUNT has entered service to Greenwich, replacing the converted fire float BETA III. This change means that for the first time all nine vessels on the Westminster-Greenwich service have catering facilities.

British Waterways Board (Regent's Canal) Neither of the two fibreglass waterbuses built in 1971 is in service this year. The WATER MONGOOSE is a static cafe at Little Venice, while the WATER BUFFALO is laid up. Their replacement is the converted narrow boat PERSEUS.

B W Wells, Strood The NEW GOLDEN SPRAY'S 1½-hour cruises on the Medway are normally at 1020, 1420 and 2000.

SOUTH COAST

Red Funnel The Company's annual report for 1977 complains of "the lack of profitability in the ferry service." Changes have been made in working arrangements while catering services have been contracted out to a company formed by a number of former catering staff.

Blue Funnel Cruises have taken over L R Barter's SKYLARK and-are thus now the sole operator of Southampton Docks cruises from the Royal Pier.

General Estates Co have purchased the SOUTHSEA QUEEN, apparently for £160 000. She has been repainted and is now based at Hythe.

M E Cutler is the new operator from Boscombe Pier, having tendered £500 per annum for the next three years for the licence. He previously ran from Boscombe from 1967 to 1974 using the ISLAND QUEEN and she is expected to resume the service though trips had not started by late June. Mr Cutler owns the Water's Edge Hotel at Boscombe and sailing details should be available from him there.

Croson Morning cruises from Swanage to Poole Harbour on Mondays and Thursdays commenced on 12 June, replacing the morning cruise from Bournemouth on these days.

CHANNEL ISLANDS

British Rail The CAESAREA and NORMANNIA finished service at Weymouth on 6 May and were replaced by the EARL GODWIN on the 8th. The EARL WILLIAM missed some Guernsey calls between 28 June and 1 July because her starboard engine was out of action. The SARNIA has been sold to the Channel Cruise Line Ltd and registered at Guernsey as the AQUAMART. She is apparently to be used for "duty free" shopping cruises from Vlissingen and Oostende. Her new owners were in the news last year over plans for cross-channel excursions to Deal. (October 1977 'Trip Out').

Isle of Sark Shipping Co The TERESA OF SARK is to be replaced by a new launch under construction in Guernsey; the TERESA will remain as standby.

Vedettes Armoricaines A new fast vessel for service to Jersey is due to be launched on 21 July.

Service Maritime, Carteret The PEGASUS entered service on 30 April.

Hovercross The PECONIC QUEEN arrived at Gorey from Hamble on 28 May.

BRISTOL CHANNEL

P & A Campbell The DEVONIA will run on the Bristol Channel with the BALMORAL for about six weeks from late July. The decision to run a 2-ship service for the first time since 1971 is seemingly prompted by the failure to obtain charter work for the DEVONIA. Revised sailing schedules are not available yet, but the BALMORAL is expected to run from Penarth and Weston while the DEVONIA will be based at Swansea. Regrettably, the early season improvement in catering standards aboard the BALMORAL has not been maintained.

Bristol Packet The TOWER BELLE sails from Bristol Bridge on alternate weekends to Bath or to the Avon Gorge; the latter is usually a 3½-hour afternoon cruise. Shorter upriver trips to Beese's Tea Gardens, Conham Ferry, or the Chequers Inn, Hanham, and City Docks cruises are offered at various times by the REDSHANK and TOWER BELLE.

NORTH WEST

Ashton Packet Boat Co has restored the 70-ft wooden narrow boat MARIA built in 1853. Fitted out to carry 40 passengers, she is making horse-drawn trips between Manchester and Marple.

IRISH SEA

Isle of Man Steam Packet Co The MANXMAN took charters on 29 May from Douglas to Holyhead and back and on 18 June from Barrow to Douglas and back. The Company handled record traffic for the TT races, taking all the Manx Line's passengers and motorcycles though not their car bookings.

Manx Line The new link span arrived in Douglas on 27 June and was ready on the 29th. A small fire aboard the MANX VIKING at Leith on 13 June caused damage to the electrical system costing £20 000, and the start of the service, due 1 July, has been postponed for a week.

TRIP OUT

August 1978

The AQUAMART, the largest British-registered excursion ship, has received wide news coverage in the past week. Even though her service is outside British waters, she deserves a mention in this journal, partly because she was the Channel Island steamer SARNIA, but more importantly because she has brought the idea of the duty-free shopping cruise much-closer to these shores. The French and Belgian authorities have reacted harshly by imposing taxes from which the cross-channel ferries and the numerous German coastal excursion ships appear to be exempt. It is disturbing that EEC rules can be applied in such a discriminatory manner. Perhaps the AQUAMART is seen as a foreign interloper openly flaunting the rather bizarre nature of her trade (the ship's name is itself enough to raise anyone's hackles). Possibly the authorities feared that her success could have led further ships to enter the trade, taking business from the cross-channel ferries, which at Oostende are owned by the Belgian Government.

The AQUAMART has been ignominiously referred to as a "floating supermarket" and "converted ferry" in the press. She is actually a fine passenger steamer and we must hope that she will somehow be able to carry on running.

Geoffrey Hamer

NORTH EAST

British Rail (Humber) now has an arrangement to charter Bogg's YORKSHIRE BELLE from Bridlington if the FARRINGFORD has to be taken out of service. The 'BELLE could reach Hull within 7 hours to run a passenger-only service.

Ashanti Cruises, York, are not operating this year; the ASHANTI GOLD is laid up in York.

EAST ANGLIA

C J Lovewell, Norwich The steam launch PRINCESS MARGARET has been joined by the motor launch PRINCESS VICTORIA (believed to have been THE PRINCE of Waveney River Tours). Normally only one vessel is in use on short river cruises.

THAMES

Thames Motor Boat Co (Westminster) The two vessels laid up last season have been advertised for sale - the WESTMINSTER BELLE for £7000 and HER MAJESTY'S for £8000.

R J Turk & Sons, Kingston, have introduced public trips to Staines, leaving Kingston at 1000 daily (except Saturdays) and returning from Staines Bridge at 1430. The journey takes around 3½ hours each way and the vessel used is the 80-year-old EMPRESS OF INDIA.

STRAITS OF DOVER

Channel Cruise Line The AQUAMART entered service on 24 July on sailings from Oostende to Dunkerque. The French authorities refused to allow passengers to disembark while Belgian customs officials charged taxes on all goods taken ashore at Oostende. This was repeated on subsequent days and the consequent drop in patronage has put the future of the service in jeopardy.

WEST OF ENGLAND

A Stuart, Exmouth, has advertised the 94-passenger DUCHESS for sale for £9000. She runs for the Exeter Maritime Museum on the Exeter Ship Canal and this business would be available to the purchaser. Dart Pleasure Craft were the buyers of the ADRIAN GILBERT and she returned to service between Dartmouth and Kingswear in June carrying British Rail's hull colours. The QUEEN BOADICEA, which had maintained the ferry during her 18-month absence, has been offered for sale.

Dart Marine Enterprises has been formed by Messrs Cobbold and Weeks to run the MARINA II, acquired from P A Lochrie, Falmouth. She sails on the usual river trips to Totnes in competition with the other Dartmouth operators.

BRISTOL CHANNEL

P & A Campbell The DEVONIA was repainted in full Campbell colours before entering service from Bristol on 21 July. She made special sailings from Bristol before going to Swansea where she is based from 27 July to 3 September. Additional sailings from Swansea and Ilfracombe include a cruise off Tintagel (20 August) and extra trips to Lundy and Clovelly. She sails from Pembroke Dock on 6 August to Ilfracombe and on 18 and 25 August to Lundy. The BALMORAL is sailing from Penarth and Weston with many days of ferry crossings though there are some extra trips to Ilfracombe, Bristol and, on 16 August, to Minehead. Saturday, normally one of the busiest days of the week, has been chosen for her fortnightly off-service day.

MIDLAND WATERWAYS

Clayton Line, Derby, has introduced charter trips from Stenson Marina on the Trent & Mersey Canal using a 42-passenger narrow boat with the strange name of STENSON BUBBLE.

IRISH SEA

Isle of Man Steam Packet Co The MANXMAN was due to take Douglas-Heysham schools charters on 3 and 4 July, but the second one was postponed till the 6th by bad weather; on 5 July she had a Tynwald Day excursion to Fleetwood. On 10 July she had a charter excursion from Warrenpoint to Douglas. A Stranraer to Douglas excursion scheduled for the MONA'S ISLE on 23 July was cancelled by gales. Extra sailings were run on 29 July to carry Manx Line passengers.

Manx Line The MANX VIKING left Leith on 29 July and, after trials, should start the much-delayed Heysham to Douglas service shortly.

MISCELLANY

The LOCHIEL was due to open as a floating pub and restaurant in Bristol on 19 July.

 © G P Hamer 2 August 1978

TRIP OUT

September 1978

After her abortive attempt to become the first British buttership, the AQUAMART lies forlorn in London, her bright red hull seeming strangely out of place in the drab dockland. The only hope for her future must lie in legal action against the French and Belgian Governments; the fact that her only likely buyers would be breakers gives hope that she may be retained in case her owners are successful.

Elsewhere, there can be no doubt that many excursion operators have suffered another poor season. Two damp, dull summers have almost eradicated memories of the glorious weather of 1975 and '76. Excursion operators at many of the coastal resorts must now be wondering whether it is worth continuing - in the past, a succession of poor summers has always led to withdrawals.

I shall refrain from commenting on P & A Campbell's continuing efforts to run two ships and would only wish other writers could do the same. I fear that those journals which carried ecstatic reports of the "success" of last year's venture on the Thames - now thankfully forgotten - will carry similar reports of this year's two-ship service on the Bristol Channel. Only time will tell whether the company has found a way of keeping two ships.

Geoffrey Hamer

NORTH EAST

T S Lowis, Whitby The GIRL PAT has been offered for sale for £6000.

EAST ANGLIA

Pleasure Steamers, Gt Yarmouth The QUEEN OF THE BROADS' sailings are on MWF to Oulton Broad and on TTh to Horning or, in certain tidal conditions, to Beccles. At weekends, only 2-hour non-landing cruises are offered. The ELIZABETH SIMPSON sails on 1½-hr cruises.
J A Wells, Gt Yarmouth, claims £3000 damage to his SCROBY QUEEN after the fishing vessel EXCELSIOR collided with her on 2 August.

THAMES

B W Wells, Strood The NEW GOLDEN SPRAY made several Southend trips in August and since 26 August, these are being offered every weekend, leaving Strood at 0800 and Rochester (Ship Pier) at 0815 on Saturdays and, one hour later, on Sundays; return to Strood is at 2115 after 7-8 hours at Southend (fare £1.95). The vessel actually makes two round trips, giving the possibility of an afternoon non-landing cruise (dep Strood 1530; fare £1.50). Bookings are handled by the Ship Inn in Rochester.
British Rail Both former River Dart ferries have been sold. As already reported, the ADRIAN GILBERT is back at Dartmouth, while the HUMPHREY GILBERT arrived at Greenwich in late August having apparently been acquired by Meridian Line Cruises.
Arthur Jacobs, Windsor The latest new vessel to join the fleet is named WINDSOR MONARCH; she was completed earlier this summer at the owners' yard.
Bray Boats, Maidenhead, are offering trips with the BRAY LADY II, formerly the SCENIC LADY at Reading. Acquired last winter, she has been fitted with a small saloon and bar.

C & P Walker, Radcot, have offered their business, now in its second season, and the narrowboat BATTERSEA, for sale for £14 500.

STRAITS OF DOVER

Channel Cruise Line The AQUAMART's final trip was on 1 August when only 110 passengers were aboard; she thus sailed for only nine days. On 4 August she arrived in London's West India Docks and the crew were paid off. The owners have announced no further plans for her.

SOUTH COAST

General Estates Co Following the purchase of the SOUTHSEA QUEEN, the HOTSPUR II has been advertised for sale.

C Foley, Southampton, has offered the MAID MARION for sale and wants a small fishing boat instead.

M E Cutler, Boscombe The ISLAND QUEEN resumed Boscombe sailings on 13 July, offering similar trips to previous years'. However, there are no cruises from Swanage or Yarmouth as these have been taken over by Croson.

R C Greenslade, Poole The EVA-MAY is running her usual trips round Poole Harbour this season but has been advertised for sale.

R A Hale, Poole The WATER WYTCH sails to Wareham usually thrice-daily at 1045, 1415 and 1830. She replaced the WATER GYPSY and thus Hale does not normally offer trips to Brownsea.

Misc Work commences this winter on rebuilding Bournemouth Pier in reinforced concrete. The £1 million project should be completed in 1980, the pier's centenary year.

CHANNEL ISLANDS

British Rail The MAID OF KENT did not make any Weymouth-Guernsey excursions in June and seems unlikely to make any this month.

Vedettes Armoricaines The new vessel has been delayed but may be launched this month.

BRISTOL CHANNEL

P & A Campbell There is no further news of plans for the DEVONIA after her "season" ends on 3 September. The BALMORAL's late-season trips include Tenby-Lundy on 22 September, the annual Isles of Scilly weekend trip on 6-9 October and two evening cruises from Bristol on 14 and 15 October - apparently the last trips of the season.

R Lewis, Chepstow The INDEPENDENCE has been advertised for sale for £6000.

 © G P Hamer 1 September 1978

TRIP OUT

October 1978

NORTH EAST

White Rose Cruises, York The 65-passenger JOHN H, built only last year, has been offered for sale for £11 500.

EAST ANGLIA

At Great Yarmouth, the GOLDEN GALLEON and QUEEN OF THE BROADS finished their seasons on 26 September. A 44-seat waterbus named AQUARIUS has commenced running this season from the Port of Yarmouth Marina on the River Bure.

THAMES

The Southend Pier Railway closed on 1 October as the pier is now considered unsafe to carry the weight of the trains.

Upriver trips from Westminster to Hampton Court finished on 17 September and Kew trips ended on 1 October - a much earlier end to the season than last year.

British Rail The HUMPHREY GILBERT's buyers were the Electro Marine Engineering Co Ltd of Peckham, London, who are believed to be associated with Meridian Line Cruises. The purchase was speculative and the vessel has been advertised for sale again.

Thames Motor Boat Co (Westminster) The WESTMINSTER BELLE has been sold for service at Falmouth after being idle for two seasons. She ran from Westminster to the Tower but was replaced when the CONNAUGHT was transferred from upriver trips.

SOUTH COAST

General Estates Co The SOUTHSEA QUEEN is being renamed HYTHE HOTSPUR and will be registered at Southampton instead of Portsmouth.

Ni E Cutler, Boscombe The ISLAND QUEEN, which finished her season on 24 September, has been offered for sale for £25 000. As a replacement, Mr Cutler wants an 80-ft steel vessel to carry 150-200 passengers.

Croson The BOURNEMOUTH BELLE finished her season on 28 September and the POOLE BELLE finishes Isle of Wight trips on 5 October. The DORSET BELLE continues on Dorset Lakes and Swanage trips at reduced fares till the end of October.

WEST OF ENGLAND

W G Pill, Falmouth, took over the Green Boats business from R M Rogers at the start of the season, thus adding the SKYLARK II and TEMPTRESS to his fleet. Last month, the WESTMINSTER BELLE was acquired and one of the Green Boats has been offered for sale.

Isles of Scilly Steamship Co For the financial year up to 31 March, which includes the SCILLONIAN III's first season, turnover was £686 936 (12% greater than the previous year's) and trading profit was £119 965 (down 29%); the poor results are blamed on the bad weather which affected day excursion traffic. The old SCILLONIAN's sale price was over £134 000.

BRISTOL CHANNEL

P & A Campbell The DEVONIA returned to lay up in Bristol after her last trip on 3 September. The BALMORAL's season ends with trips from Bristol on 21 October to Ilfracombe and on the 22nd to Lundy. The Lundy launches this season have been the LADY MOYRA and RAVENSWOOD (formerly DEVONIA); a third boat was acquired and renamed WESTWARD HO but did not enter service.

WEST WALES

Pembroke Leisure Ventures Ltd took over the TUDOR PRINCE from C I Crockford last winter. She has continued her well-established 1½-hour cruises from Hobbs Point, Pembroke Dock.

A L Irvine, Barmouth The VIKING is being advertised for sale.

MIDLAND WATERWAYS

Leisure Line, Birmingham The JACEY, which was operated independently at Coventry in 1976 and 1977, was repossessed last spring and has now been offered for sale in poor condition for £5750. The Birmingham company has also offered its own business and the BRITANNIA and EUROPE for sale.

NORTH WALES

H Williams, Caernarfon The small SNOWDON QUEEN has been placed on the market for £2750.

IRISH SEA

Isle of Man Steam Packet Co The MANXMAN took charters to Douglas on 19 August from Warrenpoint and on 28 August from Workington. The MONA'S ISLE made her last trip on 4 September and the MANXMAN finished on the 9th. Both are in Morpeth Dock, Birkenhead, and were joined there by the MANX MAID on 18 September. The BEN-MY-CHREE was due to come off service on 30 September. The SNAEFELL left Birkenhead in tow on 24 August for Blyth where she is to be broken up.

Manx Line The MANX VIKING finally entered service on 26 August but was withdrawn with engine trouble on 9 September. She resumed on 18 September sailing on one engine and carrying cargo only. The passenger service should be resumed this month.

MISCELLANY

The MEDWAY QUEEN was moved outside the Wight Marina into the River Medina in June as part of her owners' plans to return her to the Medway. In late August, she sank and now lies in up to 12 ft of water. The RYDE QUEEN is being reopened as a floating nightclub at the Wight Marina this autumn.

Compass Catering Ltd, the Manchester owners of the WESTWARD HO for the past six years, have formally applied to change her name to NORTH WESTWARD HO, the name by which she has been known during her career as a floating pub.

TRIP OUT

November 1978

Who are the country's biggest excursion boat operators ? This question should perhaps be answered by comparing annual totals of passengers or revenue, but these figures are available for very few firms. The alternative is to compare fleet sizes, considering both tonnage and passenger capacity. Here then is the 'Trip Out' top ten, based on the number of excursion vessels in service in the season which has just ended.

	GROSS TONNAGE	
1	Caledonian MacBrayne	1824
2	P & A Campbell	1609
3	Merseyside PTE	1234
4	BR (Windermere)	825
5	Waverley Steam Nav Co	693
6	Woods River Services	620
7	Salter Bros	493
8	Thames Launches	487
9	Catamaran Cruisers	464
10	Blue Funnel	460

	PASSENGER CAPACITY	
1	BR (Windermere)	2564
2	Salter Bros	2258
3	Caledonian MacBrayne	2100
4	P & A Campbell	1557
5	Thames Launches	1450
6	George Wheeler	1417
7	Blue Funnel	1264
8	Waverley Steam Nsv Co	1225
9	Broads Tours	1211
10	Catamaran Cruisers	1172

A new list will be compiled a year from now to see whether there have been any changes.

Geoffrey Hamer

NORTH EAST

British Rail (Humber) There is still no news of the LINCOLN CASTLE's future, though the National Railway Museum is still interested in her. She lies in Hull docks and there are fears that BR may not be prepared to pay berthing costs for much longer.

THAMES

Up-river trips from Westminster to Kew continued beyond 1 October for a further three weeks. The winter Westminster-Tower-Greenwich schedule began on 30 October and follows the pattern of previous years; six boats offer half-hourly sailings.

British Rail The Electro Marine Engineering Co, new owners of the HUMPHREY GILBERT (see last issue), are not connected with Meridian Line Cruises; the vessel is still at Greenwich awaiting sale.

Greenwich Pleasure Craft took over Charing Cross services from Thames Launches when the summer service ended at the end of October and are using the CHEVENING, ELTHAM and PRIDE OF GREENWICH, all used solely for charter work until now. Boats leave Charing Cross for Greenwich at 1030, 1230 and 1500 daily, while there is a slightly more frequent service to the Tower.

George Wheeler Launches, Westminster The ROYALTY will be offering Christmas luncheon cruises between 4 and 22 December on Mondays to Fridays; inclusive fare £6.

Willows Canal Restaurant Co (Regent's Canal) The owners of the restaurant boat PIPER AT THE GATES OF DAWN at Stratford-on-Avon introduced the MR TOAD AT NUMBER 10 (sic) this year on cruises from Old Ford Rd, London E2. The lunch cruise is to Mile End and the dinner cruise is along the Hertford Union Canal to the River Lea.

STRAITS OF DOVER

Cheap excursions are again available this winter. BR charges £6 from Dover or Folkestone and £7 from London to Calais or Boulogne. Normandy Ferries have an excursion fare of £4 from Dover to Boulogne for groups of at least four people.

SOUTH COAST

Red Funnel The OSBORNE CASTLE's buyers were the Traverse Trois-Pistoles - Escoumins Ltée who renamed her GOBELET D'ARGENT. She runs across the St Lawrence.

Boscombe Taurus Yacht Services The BOSCOMBE QUEEN has been sold to a Mr A Pickwoad who plans to use her as a private yacht based at Exeter. Her career as an excursion vessel was very brief; the former minesweeper HMS BREARLEY sailed from Boscombe for just two months in the 1977 season.

Croson The POOLE BELLE's Isle of Wight sailings were extended till 17 October because of the exceptionally fine weather. The DORSET BELLE made the last trips of the season - to the 'Dorset Lakes' - on 31 October.

WEST OF ENGLAND

W G Pill, Falmouth The DEVON BELLE, acquired last year and renamed NEW QUEEN OF HELFORD, reverted to her previous name this year; last year's change was presumably unofficial. Thus the fleet last season was the DEVON BELLE, MAY QUEEN, ST GERRANS, SKYLARK II, TAMAR BELLE and TEMPTRESS.

BRISTOL CHANNEL

P & A Campbell The BALMORAL completed her season on 22 October and both ships are now laid up in Bristol.

Bath Boating Co reintroduced trips upriver from Bath to Bathampton last season after a break of several years using the SCENIC I from Reading. Local anglers, however, complained that the boat was too large for the river and disturbed their fishing.

WEST WALES

Pembroke Leisure Ventures have advertised the TUDOR PRINCE for sale after running her for just one season; the asking price is £27 500.

MIDLAND WATERWAYS

Worcester Steamer Co has advertised the BELLE for sale.

IRISH SEA

Isle of Man Steam Packet Co The BEN-NY-CHREE sailed to the Clyde for dry docking on 1 October and left on 12 October for lay-up in Morpeth Dock, Birkenhead. The Company has been negotiating with DFDS over the possibility of chartering a ro/ro ship to serve the island; the Danish company's DANA GLORIA and MIKKEL MOLS are believed to be spare and should be suitable for the service.

Manx Line The MANX VIKING is due to resume carrying passengers this month. Following the financially disastrous events of recent months, the company has been taken over by James Fisher & Sons.

TRIP OUT

December 1978

EAST ANGLIA

Pleasure Steamers, Great Yarmouth The ELIZABETH SIMPSON has been advertised for sale for £14 000. She was built in 1890 as the Gorleston volunteer lifeboat and her owners claim they want to find her a "good home".

THAMES

Three Tower-based boats are running to Westminster this winter - one from each owner (Coakley, Thames Pleasure Craft and Woods); last year only Coakley maintained a winter service. This service is independent of those based at Westminster and Charing Cross.

The GLC is holding a competition for designs for a new Westminster Pier. The present pontoon is said to be in poor structural condition with an expected life of only four years. In summer it is grossly congested as both the daytime tourist trips and evening charter trade have expanded in recent years.

J P T Coakley, Tower Pier The NEW ROSELAND has been advertised for sale for £12 000; she is now at her usual winter mooring at Leigh-on-Sea.

Greenwich Pleasure Craft, Charing Cross, have introduced cruises to the Flood Barrier being built at Woolwich; the 2½-hr trips leave at 1045 and 1400 daily (fare £2). These are the first public excursions to venture downstream of Greenwich in winter. Details can be confirmed at Charing Cross Pier.

French Bros, Old Windsor, operate the PRINCESS MARY, acquired from Hill's Boatyard, York. Short cruises are offered in season from the Runnymede Boathouse at Old Windsor.

W E Walker (Regent's Canal) The FAIR LADY is making a special New Year's Eve cruise from Camden; the fare including dinner, champagne and entertainment is £18.

SOUTH COAST

British Rail A new Isle of Wight car ferry is included in BR's plans for the next five years.

CHANNEL ISLANDS

British Rail is again advertising a "jazz ship" excursion to Jersey; the trip is from Portsmouth on 23-26 February. Fares on the CI services are being increased by between 5 and 18% next year.

WEST OF ENGLAND

Isles of Scilly Steamship Co The SCILLONIAN III was in dry dock for refit at Falmouth in late November. A special cheap winter fare of £4 single is now available. Next season's single fare will be £7.50. The summer service will follow the usual pattern with daily (Sundays excepted) sailings from 6 April to 8 October, and two trips on Saturdays from 19 May to 14 September.

IRISH SEA

Isle of Man Steam Packet Co The KING ORRY is being demolished at Rochester, one year after she arrived in the Medway and three years since she was withdrawn from service.

Manx Line is now owned by an Isle of Man company in which British Rail has taken a 60% share; the remainder is owned by James Fisher & Sons. The new owners plan to increase the MANX VIKING's capacity.

MISCELLANY

The former paddle steamer WINGFIELD CASTLE was moved in early October from the Royal Albert Dock Basin to the nearby King George V Dock. Her condition is quite dilapidated after over four years in London and sponson damage in last winter's gales.

Plans are being made for another visit to England by the WAVERLEY. Sailings on the Bristol Channel as well as the South Coast and Thames are proposed for the spring and early summer; details will be given in 'Trip Out' when they become available.

www.trip-out.co.uk © G P Hamer 3 December 1978

TRIP OUT

January 1979

NORTH EAST

British Rail (Humber) Humberside County Council has decided to take no further action on proposals to acquire the LINCOLN CASTLE and there now seems little chance of her preservation on the Humber.

THAMES

Greenwich Pier was removed for refit in early December so the boats from Westminster and Charing Cross are now offering non-landing cruises to Greenwich.

Catamaran Cruisers A 96-ft catamaran is being designed by Don Tate & Associates for the company's Thames charter trade. The vessel could carry up to 550 passengers and will offer dining facilities for 260.

Aquadine Enterprises, Wargrave A 79-ft Mississippi-style vessel was launched by Impala Marine at Twickenham in November. The vessel has tall funnels and stern paddle wheels, though propulsion is by twin screws with the wheels spinning in the wash. The saloon will have dining facilities for 120 passengers.

STRAITS OF DOVER

Channel Cruise Line The AQUAMART has been sold to Greeks and was renamed GOLDEN STAR in December. She was still in London at the beginning of January.

SOUTH COAST

British Rail Fares were increased on 7 January; the Ryde crossing is now £1.06 single (previously 97p) and Fishbourne and Yarmouth are 92p (84p).

CHANNEL ISLANDS

British Rail The summer service follows the same pattern as last year's; two ships are needed at Weymouth between 9 April and 27 October with the full service of nightly and daily crossings operating from 25 May to 29 September. Winter sailings are now four times weekly from Weymouth and six times weekly from Portsmouth. 'Fares were increased by around 15% on 1 January. The CALEDONIAN PRINCESS was diverted to Cherbourg by gales on 12 December and subsequently returned direct to Weymouth without visiting the Islands.

Vedettes Blanches The St-Malo to Jersey car ferry service will be suspended between 9 January and 8 February while the SOLIDOR is off service for overhaul.

BRISTOL CHANNEL

P & A Campbell Next season's sailings follow a different pattern from recent years' because of the poor condition of Weston Pier - now usable only around high water. The Penarth sailing bill has already been published and shows a similar number of sailings to recent years' but rather fewer than half are to Weston; Weston has no sailings at all between 25 June and 27 July. Trips to Minehead, Lynmouth, Ilfracombe and Lundy from Penarth are increased while six Ilfracombe trips start at Bristol and sail via Portishead and Penarth. Swansea-based sailings follow the usual pattern. Fares are increased by around 12 to 20 %. The BALMORAL is again expected to maintain the Bristol Channel service and the company appears to have no plans for the DEVONIA. Coupon books giving £4 worth of travel for £3 are available till 31 January from the company's Cardiff office.

MIDLAND WATERWAYS

Western Cruisers, Stratford The EMMA, which has run trips on the River Avon at Warwick for three seasons, is for sale at £10 500.

IRISH SEA

Isle of Man Steam Packet Co There are a number of changes in next season's services: notably, a third weekly Dublin trip is offered by a car ferry in July and August, from Douglas on Saturdays at 1800, returning from Dublin at 1000 on Sundays. Some services on other routes are retimed and there is a slight reduction in peak season Llandudno to Douglas trips; there are 38 trips on this route between 28 May and 5 September. The single fare to the island is now £9.30 (up 9%) and day returns are £6.50 (up 18%). Special school trips between 1 and 18 May have already attracted 16 000 bookings; the 15 trips are to Douglas from Liverpool, Fleetwood, Heysham, Barrow, Workington, Holyhead and Dublin, and to Peel from Stranraer, Belfast and Warrenpoint.

Manx Line The Douglas link span broke loose in gales on 1 December and was subsequently sunk. It will be repaired at New Ross in Ireland and the service has been suspended. The MANX VIKING arrived at Harland & Wolff, Belfast, on 12 December for a £1 million refit to increase her capacity.

MISCELLANY

The Shipping & International Services Division of British Rail became a separate company, Sealink UK Ltd, on 1 January.

The piers at Clacton and Walton-on-the-Naze were both damaged in gales on 31 December.

TRIP OUT

February 1979

Waverley Steam Navigation Co During the WAVERLEY's 1979 visit to England, weekend public sailings are expected to be offered from London (5-7 May), the Medway (12-13 May), Sussex Coast (21-22 April), Solent (13-16 April and 26-28 May), South Devon and Cornwall (19-20 May) and the Bristol Channel (2-3 June). If the necessary certificate can be obtained, there will be a Penzance-Scilly excursion on 20 Nay. Bristol Channel trips will be from Avonmouth and Penarth to Ilfracombe, with a cruise round Lundy on the Sunday.

NORTH EAST

British Rail (Humber) The National Railway Museum has announced that it cannot buy the LINCOLN CASTLE because there is no effective organisation on Humberside to look after the ship. Since Humberside County Council is no longer interested, the ship will be placed on the open market and there have already been a number of offers for her.

THAMES

Salter Bros Public sailings in 1979 follow the pattern of recent years; the season extends from 20 Nay to 9 September, with the extra Windsor-Marlow boat running from 22 July to 2 September.

Misc Contractors tried to remove the remains of Margate Jetty with explosives in January. The eighth attempt on 1 February was partially successful and the work will continue.

STRAITS OF DOVER

Channel Cruise Line Under her new name of GOLDEN STAR, the AQUAMART left London on 20 January under tow for Piraeus.

SOUTH COAST

N E Cutler, Boscombe, now trades as 'Waters Edge Marine'. An offer to Bournemouth Council to pay half the cost of extending the landing stage at Boscombe Pier has been refused and the Council has said that he cannot run a larger vessel from the present stage.

D J Tiller, Poole In addition to her trips from Rockley Sands to Brownsea, the FROME LADY has also run to Wareham and given river trips from that town. Now another operator is interested in running Wareham trips and the local council is to invite tenders for a 1979 service.

CHANNEL ISLANDS

British Rail The EARL WILLIAM arrived at Avonmouth for refit on 30 December and was replaced on the Portsmouth service by the EARL GODWIN. Portsmouth crossings became twice-weekly in January because traffic was reduced by the lorry drivers' strike, but the service is now back to normal. The Weymouth route is suspended for the whole of this month as BR claim to have no ship available - the CALEDONIAN PRINCESS is presumably off for refit.

Cie Côte des Isles The AIGRETTE V's Portbail-Gorey service runs from 17 March to 11 November. Departure times vary between 0500 and 0030 because of tidal problems. Excursions to Sark and St Peter Port are offered on some days.

BRISTOL CHANNEL

P & A Campbell The Company's 1977 accounts, published last year, show a loss of £49 852 before tax, compared with a published profit of £14 814 in 1976. The revenue of £230 943 was only £11 890 more than in 1976, despite the BALMORAL's lucrative visit to the Jubilee Naval Review and the DEVONIA's Southend service. The latter was responsible for considerably increased operating costs, including pilotage charges of £13 832 compared with only £678 in 1976. The sum of £135 000 for the purchase of the DEVONIA was provided by the parent company, European Ferries.

NORTH WEST

Merseyside PTE The ferry section of Liverpool Landing Stage was damaged in January and, whilst it is being repaired, the ferries are using part of the Isle of Nan steamers' stage. The ferries were very busy on the four days of rail strikes in January. The MOUNTWOOD and OVERCHURCH were in service at the time and the WOODCHURCH was being refitted. The cruise vessel ROYAL IRIS was drydocked for refit between 4 and 12 January.

IRISH SEA

Isle of Man Steam Packet Co The BEN-MY-CHREE returned to service on 18 January, replacing the MONA'S QUEEN which went to the Clyde for refit. Demolition of the KING ORRY at Rochester was completed in January.

Nanx Line plans to increase the MANX VIKING's passenger capacity to 840, some 300 more than last summer's certificate allowed. They hope to resume the service before next summer.

MISCELLANY

The former Isle of Wight ferry CARISBROOKE CASTLE, now the Italian CITTA DI META, was in the news recently through an act described by the news media as "piracy". Between Napoli and Ischia, robbers stole mailbags, destroyed the ship's radio and then made off in a launch.

A one-time Norwegian coastal passenger/cargo ship was abandoned off the Pembrokeshire coast on 21 January. The BALHOLM (1949, 241 grt) came to England in October 1974 and subsequently became a floating restaurant at Bangor, County Down. Why she was proceeding southwards is not known, but the six crew were rescued by lifeboat.

 © G P Hamer 4 February 1979

TRIP OUT

March 1979

Waverley Steam Navigation Co The WAVERLEY will not be able to visit the Isles of Scilly and will offer an alternative sailing on 20 May, but the rest of her programme from 13 April to 4 June is going ahead. Booking agents include Grey-Green Travel in London, National Travel at Brighton, Bournemouth and Torquay, and P & A Campbell on the Bristol Channel.

NORTH EAST

British Rail (Humber) The LINCOLN CASTLE has been offered for sale by tender with a closing date of 21 March. She will not necessarily be sold to the highest bidder and BR has intimated that an offer from local preservationists would be treated sympathetically.

Hill's Boatyard, York Reportedly sold a year ago, the PRINCESS KATHARINE was still in service last summer. She has now been sold and will run in Sheffield.

EAST ANGLIA

Mississippi River Boats After two years based at Wroxham, the SOUTHERN COMFORT is now based at the Swan Hotel, Horning. She offers year-round charter trips.

THAMES

Thames Launches The HURLINGHAM has been sold to Tidal Cruisers for charter work in London. The VESTA is being renamed DUCHESS M.

F & B Boat Co, Kingston, has acquired the BETA III, a former fire float which operated from Westminster for Thompson's Launches until the end of the 1977 season. She will run from Kingston to Hampton Court in place of the RICHMOND GEM.

Abingdon Marine, Newbridge After four seasons on the upper Thames, the MAYBUSH has been sold to Trent Valley Cruises. As a replacement, the smaller RICHMOND GEM has been acquired.

C & P Walker, Radcot The business, carried on under the name Thames Cruises, and the BATTERSEA have been taken over by N Elwes.

SOUTH COAST

M J Rayment, Cowes The SPARKLE from Paignton was renamed JENNY LEE in 1977 but was sold for service in Orkney at the end of the season. The NEMESIS II was acquired from Saundersfoot and ran at Cowes last season as the JENNY LEE.

Croson hope to modify the DORSET BELLE to increase her passenger capacity and reduce the gross tonnage from the present 94 to below 50.

CHANNEL ISLANDS

British Rail The EARL WILLIAM left Avonmouth on 22 February to replace the EARL GODWIN at Portsmouth. The CALEDONIAN PRINCESS was also drydocked at Avonmouth, between 22 and 28 February, before resuming the Weymouth service on 1 March.

Service Maritime, Carteret The catamaran PEGASUS runs to Gorey from 9 April to 4 November; there are Guernsey trips on certain dates between 13 May and 7 September. LES TROIS LEOPARDS serves Jersey from 28 April to 13 September, usually making a daily round trip to Gorey but lying at St Helier for 1-3 days every fortnight when tides are least suitable for a day excursion.

WEST OF ENGLAND

Exeter Maritime Museum will not be running trips along the Ship Canal this year. The boat used, the DUCHESS owned by A Stuart, has been up for sale since the end of last season.

M D Barrow, Exmouth & Torquay, has ordered a 63-ft steel-hulled vessel to carry around 170 passengers. Delivery is expected towards the end of the season.

BRISTOL CHANNEL

P & A Campbell The DEVONIA was dry docked at Cardiff in early February for inspection. The BALMORAL should now be at Penzance for her refit. Sailings commence as usual at Easter. Because of a landslide on Lundy, the island is expected to be closed to visitors until at least late May; it is not clear how the early season schedules will be amended. Amongst charters open to the public are a trip from Barry to Watchet and Minehead on 21 April with a special train from London (Lea Valley Railway Club) and a trip to Sharpness on 19 May from Penarth and Portishead.

WEST WALES

Jones & Teague, Saundersfoot The NEMESIS II was sold before the 1978 season and was not replaced. Saundersfoot thus has no DoT passenger vessels, though a number of small boats offers trips mainly for anglers.

Pembroke Leisure Ventures The TUDOR PRINCE is believed to have been sold to Staffa Marine for excursions between Mull, Staffa and. Iona. There have been no reports of a replacement for the trips from Pembroke Dock.

M & L Irvine, Barmouth The VIKING is being replaced by a new 84-passenger vessel this year.

IRISH SEA

Isle of Man Steam Packet Co The Liverpool-Llandudno excursions and cruises from Llandudno are scheduled for 20 dates between 27 May and 26 August - a further reduction on previous years. The MONA'S QUEEN left the Clyde on 6 February and returned to service on the 22nd, replacing the LADY OF MANN which vent to Manchester for overhaul. The MANXMAN entered dry dock in Liverpool on 16 February and has a week's charter this month to make a film about the TITANIC. The Company's accounts for 1978 show turnover of £10 101 842 (23% more than in 1977) and a net profit of £1 135 628 (up 159%). The excellent result is partly attributable to their reduced fleet (the SNAEFELL was sold for scrap for around £31 000) and increased numbers of staying visitors - the highest for 16 years; day excursion traffic was affected by poor weather and was only slightly better than the very poor year of 1977.

TRIP OUT

April 1979

Waverley Steam Navigation Co Further amendments have been made to the published schedule for the WAVERLEY's visit to England. The exorbitant costs of berthing at Newhaven have led to the cancellation of some calls there (on 20 and 30 April, and 15 May) though the port is still being used as an overnight base. She sails on the Clyde on 5 and 7 April before steaming to Southampton where there is a press conference on Good Friday, 13 April, to publicise the venture. Her first cruise is from Southampton that evening.

NORTH EAST

British Rail (Humber) The FARRINGFORD was replaced by the Isle of Wight ferry FRESHWATER during her annual refit between mid-January and mid-February.

EAST ANGLIA

K Baldwin, Great Yarmouth The waterbus AQUARIUS was acquired from Nene Valley Cruises and was built in 1973. Public trips from late May to mid-September are day trips to Ranworth or Oulton Broad (on Tue and Thu) and 2-hour cruises (on Mon, Wed and Fri).

THAMES

Greenwich Pier reopened in early March after a 3-month closure for repairs; boats running from Westminster, Charing Cross and Tower Piers have resumed calling there.

George Wheeler Launches, Westminster An 85-ft vessel of about 110 gross tons has been ordered from the Bideford Shipyard for delivery in September. The vessel will be owned by deep-sea shipowners John I Jacobs & Co Ltd but will run with the Wheeler fleet at Westminster.

R J Turk & Sons, Kingston, do not intend to repeat last summer's service to Staines. They intend to run public sailings from Hampton Court and Kingston to Richmond.

SOUTH COAST

General Estates Co The HOTSPUR II has been sold to the Clyde Marine Motoring Co of Greenock and is being renamed KENILWORTH. She had been for sale since the purchase of the SOUTHSEA QUEEN (now HYTHE HOTSPUR) last summer.

Croson The POOLE BELLE was slipped for refit in mid-March. The DORSET BELLE'S superstructure is being rebuilt.

CHANNEL ISLANDS

Vedettes Armoricaines The new 300-passenger JAGUAR was due to enter service between St-Malo and Jersey on 30 March. The service runs until 11 November with up to three round trips a day. The JAGUAR is largely enclosed and designed primarily for a high speed.

BRISTOL CHANNEL

P & A Campbell The BALMORAL is based at Swansea at Easter and is advertised to sail to Ilfracombe and Lundy on Fri, Sun and Tue; on Saturday there are two Ilfracombe trips with an afternoon Gower Coast cruise from Mumbles; on Monday she sails from Penarth and Weston to Ilfracombe.

WEST WALES

Pembroke Leisure Last month's report that the TUDOR PRINCE had been sold is not correct. She will run from Pembroke Dock this year and is being joined by a new 56-ft 125-passenger vessel named TUDOR PRINCESS. The 1½-hr cruises run daily between May and Oct, upriver at 1100 and 1500 and downriver at 1300 and 1700. In July and August, the second vessel runs extra trips upriver at 1200 and 1600 and downriver at 1400. A 3-hr evening cruise is offered at 2000 in June, July and August.

NORTH WEST

National Trust, Coniston The appeal to raise £95 000 to restore the GONDOLA is progressing well. An exact replica of the original steam engine is to be built at Doncaster. It is hoped to have the GONDOLA in service in the summer of 1980.

IRISH SEA

Isle of Man Steam Packet Co The LADY OF MANN left Manchester after refit on 21 March; the MANX MAID began her refit at Manchester on 20 March.

Manx Line expect to resume the passenger service with the MANX VIKING in late-May.

MISCELLANY

The 1978 visiting figures for islands in the care of the National Trust were: Brownsea 105 000 (99 000 in 1977); Farne 41 000 (32 000); Lundy, under 20 000. St Michael's Mount, an island at high tide, had 182 000 visitors (141 000 in 1977) and was the Trust's most-visited property.

www.trip-out.co.uk © G P Hamer 4 April 1979

TRIP OUT

May 1979

NORTH EAST

British Rail (Humber) The LINCOLN CASTLE has been sold to Mr Francis Daly, a Hull nightclub owner, who plans to berth her in Hull's Prince's Dock as a restaurant.

D Potter, Hull, is offering charter trips from Hull and New Holland, mainly for anglers, on the 55-passenger SALVOR II (previously the Bridlington angling boat BRITANNIA).

THAMES

The GLC is inviting tenders for a new Westminster Pier. The new structure, "substantially larger" than the present pontoon, should have a restaurant, cafeteria and bureau de change. Completion is expected by March 1982.

J P T Coakley, Tower Pier The Thames Ship Society is chartering the VAROS on 20 May for a trip from Tower Pier, Greenwich and Tilbury to Southend. Fare £3.25 for non-members.

Greenwich Pleasure Craft are operating half-hourly services from Charing Cross to Tower and Greenwich similar to those provided by Thames Launches in previous seasons. At present, the PRINCESS MARINA, and the chartered CHERRY GARDEN run to Tower, while the other four vessels serve Greenwich. From late-May, cruises will be offered to the Flood Barrier at Woolwich.

George Wheeler Launches, Westminster The contract price of the new vessel being built at Bideford is £280 000.

W A Jackson, Westminster and Richmond, has acquired the veteran YARMOUTH BELLE from Thames Launches and has been running her since Easter at weekends from Richmond to Hampton Court.

Andrews Bros Boatbuilders (Maidenhead) Ltd are entering the charter trade with a new 58-ft 100-passenger vessel named TEMPTRESS. The vessel is now fitting out at Maidenhead and is due in service in July.

SOUTH COAST

Waverley Steam Navigation Co The WAVERLEY arrived at Southampton late on 13 April after being delayed by bad weather;, she spent some time sheltering in St Ives Bay. Her first cruise was around the Isle of Wight on 14 April when about 350 passengers were aboard. After being based at Southampton and Poole, she moved to Newhaven on 20 April and operated on the Sussex coast for the rest of April. Sailings generally have been less well patronised than last year's.

Red Funnel The Group's pre-tax profit for 1978 was £1.08 million (£487 000 in 1977). This included a surplus of £156 000 on the sale of the OSBORNE CASTLE. There was a small increase in traffic on both the car ferry and hydrofoil services.

D A England, Southampton, has offered the ST DAVID for sale owing to ill health, As she was the last boat running docks cruises from the Town Quay, it seems that these are now likely to lapse (similar trips are still available from the Royal Pier).

Croson The POOLE BELLE offered Easter 'Dorset Lakes' cruises and trips round the Bay from 9 to 20 April, and resumes trips on 6 May after carrying out some charters. The other two vessels resume service at the Spring Bank Holiday weekend.

BRISTOL CHANNEL

P & A Campbell Contrary to earlier fears, passengers are being landed on Lundy despite a landslip which has partly destroyed the path from the landing beach. Some changes have been made to the BALMORAI's originally published schedule; two trips from Penarth to Tenby have been replaced by a Penarth-Weston ferry on 13 July and by two Penarth-Minehead trips on 10 September.

NORTH WEST

Merseyside PTE This year's charters of the OVERCHURCH on the Manchester Ship Canal are on 23-24 June, 25-26 August and 22-23 September, sailing in each case from Liverpool on Saturday and from Manchester on Sunday. Contact Co-op Travel for further details.

IRISH SEA

Isle of Man Steam Packet Co The MANXMAN was used for filming off the east coast of the Isle of Man between 11 and 18 March. The MONA'S ISLE entered drydock at Liverpool on 23 March. The LADY OF MANN returned to service on 12 April, taking a charter party from Dublin to Douglas for Easter. The three ships (BEN-MY-CHREE, LADY OF MANN and MONA'S QUEEN) remained in service after Easter and on 29 April began a programme of educational trips. These include trips to Peel from Dublin, Warrenpoint, Belfast and Stranraer, and to Douglas from Workington, Barrow, Fleetwood, Liverpool and Holyhead, most of the trips being scheduled for the two motorships. Manx Line expects its Douglas link span to be back from repair in Ireland by 16 May; the MANX VIKING is due to resume service on 19 May.

MISCELLANY

The owners of the ps WINGFIELD CASTLE, currently lying in the King George V Dock, London, are looking for a permanent berth for her. Having failed to find one in London, they have been considering Brighton and Hull.

www.trip-out.co.uk © G P Hamer 2 May 1979

TRIP OUT

June 1979

Waverley Steam Navigation Co The WAVERLEY completed her southern programme on 3 June and was then due to sail via Fishguard to Campbeltown. In all, passengers were carried from 23 piers: Tower Pier, Greenwich, Tilbury, Southend, Chatham, Deal, Hastings, Eastbourne, Newhaven, Worthing, Southsea (Clarence), Sandown, Ryde, Southampton, Bournemouth, Poole, Weymouth, Torquay, Plymouth, Ilfracombe, Avonmouth, Penarth and Barry. The steamer also berthed at St Ives (en route from Scotland) and Dover. Some days' sailings were cancelled through a lack of bookings and a few calls were missed because of bad weather, but there have been no reports of mechanical problems. Amongst changes to the schedule was the substitution of Chatham Naval Dockyard as departure point on 13 May as Phoenix Wharf at Strood was unsuitable. Generally patronage has not been as good as last year, though trips from London and on the Bristol Channel were well supported. The visit is not thought to have been profitable and seems unlikely to be repeated.

THAMES

D Rose, Rochester The NEW GOLDEN SPRAY has been acquired from B W Wells by D J Dixon of Rochester and is being operated by Mr Rose. The vessel, originally at Margate, later Ramsgate then last season at Strood, has been renamed QUEEN OF KENT and will offer regular trips from Rochester to Southend.

Greenwich Pleasure Craft A new vessel similar to the ELTHAM was launched at the parent company's Greenwich yard in May. When she enters service later this month, cruises from Charing Cross to the Flood Barrier at Woolwich will be reintroduced.

Thames Launches The last vessel of this once-large fleet, the DUCHESS M (ex VESTA), has been rebuilt at the firm's Twickenham yard and has new deck lounges. She is being offered for sale for £95 000.

R J Turk & Sons, Kingston The new service to Richmond ('Three Pigeons' landing stage) from Hampton Court and Kingston began on 26 May; the two ROYALEs make five trips from Richmond daily (except Mondays) while the elegant veteran EMPRESS OF INDIA runs additional Kingston to Hampton Court trips. The crews are not licensed watermen (normally required on the tidal Thames) and this provoked a one-day strike by crews on other London boats.

Golden Cruises Ltd, Benson, are introducing trips from Benson to Clifton Hampden, Wallingford and Goring with a new 110-passenger vessel named GOLDEN ROSE. Charter trips are offered all year.

STRAITS OF DOVER

RTM The REINE ASTRID visited Southend on 5 May with an excursion from Oostende. Further trips to Southend have apparently been cancelled because of the closure of the pier railway.

SOUTH COAST

British Rail The ships' crews have refused to work *new* summer schedules and the ships have continued winter services, though crews agreed to work full services on the Spring Bank Holiday weekend. The SHANKLIN's passenger accommodation has been improved and an additional saloon has been built on the upper deck.

M E Cutler, Boscombe The ISLAND QUEEN entered service on 27 May on a similar schedule to last year.

Croson The DORSET BELLE entered service on 21 May with her capacity increased to 198. The BOURNEMOUTH BELLE began her season on 27 May.

CHANNEL ISLANDS

Service Maritime, Carteret The origins of the Westamaran PEGASUS are more complex than previously reported. She was built in 1976 in Norway as the TA YUE SHAN for Hong Kong owners, but returned to Norwegian ownership in 1977 when she became the GIMLETUN. She was renamed PEGASUS in 1978 when acquired for service to the CI.

WEST OF ENGLAND

St Mawes Ferry Co The NANKERSEY was out of service last season after being damaged in gales in February 1978. She has been repaired at a cost of over £10 000 and is now back in service.

WEST WALES

Pembroke Leisure The TUDOR PRINCE is again for sale at £30 000 with delivery available on 1 September.

IRISH SEA

Isle of Man Steam Packet Co The MANXMAN emerged from Morpeth Dock, Birkenhead, on 17 May and was followed out on 25 May by the MONA'S ISLE. The MANX MAID completed her refit at Manchester, leaving on 23 May for Liverpool.

Manx Line The MANX VIKING left Belfast for Heysham on 15 May; she has additional lifeboats and other modifications to increase her passenger capacity to 800. She is now back in service.

MISCELLANY

The PRIDE OF PAIGNTON, which was withdrawn from service by the South Western Steam Navigation Co before the start of the 1977 season, is now owned by a Mr P V Thompson of Brixton, London. She is being renamed MARS PETRA and is presumably used as a yacht.

 © G P Hamer 5 June 1979

TRIP OUT

July 1979

NORTH EAST

British Rail (Humber) Fares were increased by about 7½% on 1 July. The opening of the Humber Bridge has been postponed again and is now due in late-1980; BR intends to close the ferry and New Holland Pier as soon as the bridge opens.

Alan Oliver (Cruises), Doncaster The Humber Keel and Sloop Preservation Society is chartering the WYRE LADY from Sprotbrough on 4 August.

EAST ANGLIA

Pleasure Steamers, Gt Yarmouth The QUEEN OF THE BROADS ran aground in Breydon Water on the evening of 19 June with 120 passengers aboard. They were taken off by lifeboat, though it was 0430 before the last passengers were taken back to Yarmouth_.

THAMES

D Rose, Rochester The QUEEN OF KENT began running at the beginning of June, sailing initially on Wednesdays, Saturdays and Sundays at 0900 and 1600 from Rochester to Southend (£2.95 day return); a river cruise is offered from Rochester at 1430 (£1.25). Mr Rose plans to offer some unusual trips, including sailings upriver to Aylesford and through the Swale to Faversham and Whitstable.

British Rail Fares on the Tilbury ferry will rise by about 8% on 15 July.

Greenwich Pleasure Craft The new vessel is named SYDNEY HULL after a former manager of the company and entered service about 22 June. A daily cruise from Charing Cross to the Flood Barrier at Woolwich leaves at 1230 and takes 2-2½ hours.

Father Thames The FATHER THAMES is not operating this season and her present whereabouts are unknown.

Golden Cruises, Benson Shortly after completion, the 106-passenger GOLDEN ROSE has been advertised for sale.

SOUTH COAST

British Rail Summer schedules finally began on 21 June after a pay dispute with the ships' officers was settled. Fares for motorists and vehicles were increased by about 7½% on 1 July and those for foot passengers will rise by a similar amount on 15 July.

CHANNEL ISLANDS

Vedettes Armoricaines The JAGUAR was built by Tecimar at St-Nazaire along the lines of a naval fast patrol boat. The hull is of reinforced plastic. Engines totalling 4000 hp give a speed of around 25 knots. She operates to Jersey from St-Malo.

BRISTOL CHANNEL

P & A Campbell Unusual sailings by the BALMORAL this month include a trip from Swansea and Ilfracombe to Tenby on 20 July, trips from Penarth to Clovelly on 9 and 23 July, and from Bristol via Portishead and Penarth to Ilfracombe on 14 July. Contrary to an earlier report, the DEVONIA has not moved from Bristol since last September.

NORTH WEST

Arfon Borough Council plans to replace the NANTLYS which is apparently 58 years old and becoming expensive to maintain.

IRISH SEA

Manx Line The MANX VIKING resumed service on 19 May, but the ramp at Douglas was not ready till 29 June.

Isle of Man Steam Packet Co The MANXMAN hit Llandudno Pier on 21 June and was off service for repairs at Birkenhead till the 28th. Unusual sailings by the two passenger steamers have included day trips from Workington to Douglas (28 May, MANXMAN), Douglas to Holyhead (29 Nay, MANXMAN) and Dublin to Douglas (24 June, MONA'S ISLE), all on charter. The MANXMAN is taking a Tynwald Day excursion from Douglas to Llandudno on 5 July. The MONA'S ISLE is generally expected to be withdrawn from service next winter though the Company has yet to announce any plans for a replacement for the two passenger ships; ro/ro tonnage appears to be under consideration.

www.trip-out.co.uk © G P Hamer 4 July 1979

TRIP OUT

August 1979

NORTH EAST

Hill's Boatyard, York The PRINCESS ROYAL is to be sold at the end of the season and is being advertised for £7000. She was previously the GONDOLIER at Falmouth and this is her fifth season on the River Ouse.

Alan Oliver (Cruises), Doncaster The WYRE LADY is being chartered by the Railway & Canal Historical Society for a cruise up the Trent from West Stockwith on 29 September.

THAMES

Meridian Line Cruises The SWANAGE QUEEN is making a public day trip from Greenwich to Southend on Wednesday 15 August (fare £4; booking recommended).

Catamaran Cruisers A new steel catamaran, 96 ft long and 29 ft in beam, is being built by Cubow at Woolwich for delivery in April 1980. It will carry up to 350 passengers on charter trips with dining facilities for 275.

George Wheeler Launches, Westminster Delivery of the new vessel due in September now seems to be in doubt as the builders, Bideford Shipyard (1973) Ltd, are in liquidation.

D G Moore, Westminster, took delivery of the NEW MARY LOUISE from the Impala Marine yard at Twickenham in April. She operates non-landing cruises in conjunction with the Tideway fleet.

Windsor Boats Only one season after being taken over from Golding Bros, the WINDSOR SCEPTRE has been sold.

Bray Boats, Maidenhead, have acquired the WINDSOR SCEPTRE and renamed her BRAY PRINCESS.

SOUTH COAST

R B Marsh, Swanage The LAUREL LEAF is being offered for sale following the death of her owner; the trips at Swanage have presumably ceased.

CHANNEL ISLANDS

Vedettes Armoricaines The JAGUAR'S sailings from St-Malo to St Helier are being extended to St Peter Port on Sundays 5, 19 and 26 August and 9, 16 and 23 September.

WEST OF ENGLAND

Western Lady Ferry Service is using the Princess Pier at Torquay this year; last year it was closed and the boats temporarily ran from the Haldon Pier.

BRISTOL CHANNEL

P & A Campbell The BALMORAL's sailings up to mid-September include trips from up-channel ports on 10-13 and 24-27 August and 7-10 September. On 25 August and 8 September, the day trip starts at Bristol. She is otherwise based at Swansea. The annual trip to St Ives, Penzance and Scilly is on 5-8 October. The final sailing of the season appears to be on 21 October.

NORTH WEST

Colliery Narrow Boat Co, Northwich The BRACKLEY will be offering short public cruises during the IWA National Rally at Northwich on 18-19 August.

MISCELLANY

Boatbuilders Impala Marine Ltd of Twickenham have gone into liquidation- They had built several passenger vessels including in recent years the ANNE OF ETIVE, DUKE OF YORK, GOLDEN SALAMANDER and WAVENEY PRINCESS, and were under the same ownership as Thames Launches who formerly operated a large fleet of passenger vessels in London.

During the WAVERLEY's visit to England and Wales, 66 000 passenger journeys were made aboard her; assuming each passenger makes a return trip, this gives an average of around 750 passengers per day, compared with over 1000 in 1978.

British Rail's DUKE OF LANCASTER is being renamed DUKE OF LLANERCH-Y-MOR and her new owners, Empirewise Ltd of Liverpool, plan to use her as a 'leisure centre' at Mostyn on the Dee estuary.

www.trip-out.co.uk © G P Hamer 1 August 1979

TRIP OUT

September 1979

The summer which is now drawing to a close could perhaps be described as typically British with no great extremes of weather. The excursion operators could probably count on average traffic figures if it were not for one new factor - the increased price of oil. Bunkering passenger vessels appears to have caused no problems. Nearly all cross-channel ferry operators have added fuel surcharges to fares, but fortunately only a few excursion operators (notably Croson and P & A Campbell) have done likewise. Perhaps more serious has been the impact on the holiday motorist who finds his jaunts costing considerably more. The tourist trade in far-flung parts of the country has suffered badly and boat operators in these areas will have had a poor season. On the other hand, those near the large centres of population should have benefitted from the motorists' reluctance to go far. In London, road traffic has been heavier than for some years and on fine days popular spots such as Hampton Court have been as busy as ever.

Geoffrey Hamer

EAST ANGLIA

Orwell & Harwich Navigation Co is being taken over by European Ferries on 1 October; the BRIGHTLINGSEA will continue the Harwich-Felixstowe, ferry and river cruises. The business was formed by Mr Goodhew in 1962 to take over the service closed by BR and also operated cruises with the ORWELL HAVEN (now TINARANA) and later the TORBAY PRINCE (now TUDOR PRINCE). Mr Goodhew died in 1970 but his widow has continued to run the BRIGHTLINGSEA since then.

THAMES

D Rose, Rochester In addition to Southend trips on three days a week, the QUEEN OF KENT has made afternoon and evening cruises up and down the Medway on Thursdays. The evening trip goes up to Aylesford when tides permit.

Meridian Line Cruises The SWANAGE QUEEN made another public excursion from Greenwich to Southend on Sunday 2 September.

J P T Coakley, Tower Pier The NEW ROSELAND did not enter service this season and is believed to have been sold. Her place on public sailings from Tower Pier has been taken by the other operators' vessels.

French Bros, Runnymede, are building a steel hulled saloon vessel to carry about 150 passengers at their Boathouse.

Better Boating Co This Reading boatyard has offered short cruises from Abingdon with the small launch GOLDEN HARVESTER. She has now been replaced by the 94-passenger ST DAVID from Southampton.

Abingdon Marine, Newbridge The RICHMOND GEM is for sale for £2895 after just one season on the trips from Newbridge.

SOUTH COAST

British Rail A boy was killed on 12 August when a dinghy was run down by the CENWULF at Yarmouth.

D A England, Southampton The ST DAVID has been sold for service on the Thames.

CHANNEL ISLANDS

Condor Mr Peter Dorey, managing director of Condor since its formation in 1964, died on 15 August when he was swept overboard from his yacht competing in the Fastnet race.

BRISTOL CHANNEL

P & A Campbell Swansea railings continue till 29 September, with the BALMORAL based up-channel on 7-10 and 21-25 September. Unusual trips are on 22 September from Bristol and Penarth to the Gower Coast, on the 26th from Tenby to Ilfracombe and on the 30th from Ilfracombe to Penarth and Bristol. A strange trip on 13 October sails at 0100 from Bristol via Penarth and Ilfracombe to give 7 hours on Lundy, arriving back in Bristol at 2400.

R Lewis, Chepstow The INDEPENDENCE is again for sale; the asking price is £4500 compared with £6000 when she was offered a year ago.

Avon Cruises (Bath) Ltd was formed by a local taxi owner to take over the River Avon Cruises business this season. The GARY has been joined by a 52-passerger vessel named KINGFISHER.

MIDLAND WATERWAYS

Western Cruisers, Stratford, have offered MY LADY HILTON for sale for £10 500.

Grebe Canal Cruises have taken over the EMPRESS OF MILTON KEYNES jointly with Autrant Waterway Services. The 72-ft narrow boat offers public and charter cruises from Willowbridge Marina on the Grand Union Canal between Bletchley and Leighton Buzzard.

Trent Valley Cruises The business was acquired last winter by David and Cynthia Dumbleton from the previous owner, K F Gracie. The new proprietors have advertised their interest in acquiring another business or starting a new venture.

NORTH WEST

Inland Waterway Holiday Cruises have offered the narrow boat LAPWING for sale.

Ullswater Navigation & Transit Co The LADY OF THE LAKE, out of service since 1965, has been re-engined and restored to service this season, normally running charter trips. Built of iron in 1877, she measures 43 grt and was steam engined till 1935.

 © G P Hamer 5 September 1979

TRIP OUT

October 1979

NORTH SEA

North Sea Ferries are repeating last year's New Year's Eve cruise from Hull; the NORLAND leaves on 31 December and returns the next morning.

EAST ANGLIA

D C Wells, Great Yarmouth, took delivery of a new 71-passenger vessel named GLENDA MARGARET this year. She operated the cruises to Scroby Sandbank, replacing the 52-passenger JOAN AND DORIS which has been available for sale since September 1978.

THAMES

Catamaran Cruisers There was a small fire aboard the SUERITA whilst she was alongside Tower Pier on 28 September preparing for an evening party. The upper deck and some disco equipment were damaged.

Tidal Cruisers, London The MARCHIONESS, acquired last winter, did not run any public sailings as her owners had hoped, and has been used solely for charter trips for which a rather ugly saloon has been added to her foredeck. She and the HURLINGHAM are based at the Greenland Dock Entrance, Rotherhithe. The owners' original vessel, the waterbus CLAIREST, has been sold.

Capital Cruises is the new trading name of DCW Tours who have organised evening trips in London using chartered vessels. The GOLDEN ROSE, built earlier this year for Golden Cruises of Benson, has been acquired and now operates in London.

Thames Cruises, Hampton Court, have not run a public service to Walton this year and the PRIDE OF TEST has been used solely for charter trips.

Bray Boats, Maidenhead Following the purchase of the WINDSOR SCEPTRE (now renamed BRAY PRINCESS), the BRAY LADY II is for sale for £7000. 2-hour cruises have been offered on Sunday afternoons this autumn.

STRAITS OF DOVER

Both Townsend Thoresen Ferries and Sealink are offering excursions to France or Belgium this winter for £4 (i6 on Saturdays).

CHANNEL ISLANDS

British Rail Fares were increased by an average of 17% on 1 October. From Weymouth, the two-ship service continues till 27 October after which the CALEDONIAN PRINCESS maintains the service for the first part of the winter.

WEST OF ENGLAND

S Jones, Falmouth, has offered the EVELINA IV for sale and may replace her with a smaller boat.

BRISTOL CHANNEL

P & A Campbell The condition of the Birnbeck Pier at Weston-super-Mare is now so poor that no calls will be made there in future seasons. The pier was opened in 1867 and has been used by steamers ever since. One final trip is being made on the evening of 19 October from Penarth with a cruise from Weston around the Holms. Earlier this month, the BALMORAL reached St Ives on her weekend trip but the excursions to Penzance and the Isles of Scilly were cancelled because of the weather. There are strong suggestions that the BALMORAL will not be used after her season ends on 21 October and that the DEVONIA will operate the Bristol Channel sailings in future seasons.

MIDLAND WATERWAYS

Pullman Marine, Stratford, introduced a new 56-ft 46-passenger vessel named GIGI last year. She is used for charter trips and is said to offer "the comfort and amenities of a modern touring coach."

Shropshire Union Canal Society The POWYS PRINCESS does not appear to have been in service at Welshpool this season and the hull has been offered for sale for £2500 after removal of engine, cabin and fittings.

IRISH SEA

Isle of Man Steam Packet Co The MONA'S ISLE began her winter lay-up in Morpeth Dock, Birkenhead, on 3 September and was joined there by the MANXMAN about six days later. The BEN-MY-CHREE was docked at Birkenhead on 17 September. The MONA'S QUEEN was dry-docked at Liverpool on 1 October, leaving the LADY OF MANN and MANX MAID in service.

MISCELLANY

The Clyde vessel QUEEN OF SCOTS has been offered for sale or charter and her owners, BB Shipping (Dunoon), seem unlikely to continue trading. An article on the ships 44-year career at Scarborough, at Bournemouth and on the Clyde appears in this month's issue of 'Ships Monthly'.

 © G P Hamer 13 October 1979

TRIP OUT

November 1979

A year ago, 'Trip Out' included lists of the UK's largest excursion fleets, arranged by gross tonnage and by passenger capacity. This year's lists are presented below. As before, only vessels entirely or mainly engaged in making pleasure trips are included. The figures relate to last summer and do not take account of subsequent changes (the Woods fleet, for example, has now increased to 1073 grt). Last year's positions are given in brackets for comparison.

	GROSS TONNAGE	
1(1)	Caledonian MacBrayne	1824
2(3)	Merseyside PTE	1234
3(4)	BR (Windermere)	825
4(5)	Waverley Steam Nav Co	693
5(2)	P & A Campbell	688
6(6)	Woods River Services	620
7(7)	Salter Bros	493
8(9)	Catamaran Cruisers	464
9(10)	Blue Funnel Cruises	460
10(-)	Thames Pleasure Craft	455

	PASSENGER CAPACITY	
1(1)	BR (Windermere)	2564
2(2)	Salter Bros	2258
3(3)	Caledonian MacBrayne	2100
4(6)	George Wheeler	1417
5(-)	Greenwich Pleasure C	1334
6(7)	Blue Funnel Cruises	1264
7(-)	Thames Pleasure Craft	1256
8(8)	Waverley Steam Nav Co	1225
9(9)	Broads Tours	1178
10(10)	Catamaran Cruisers	1172

THAMES

Some 36 entries are being considered in the GLC's competition for designs for a new Westminster Pier and the winner will be chosen by January. The present structure, apparently used by some 2½ million passengers annually, is to be replaced by 1982. Amongst the more outlandish schemes submitted is one incorporating a big dipper.

Woods River Services have acquired the FATHER THAMES from Matthews Holdings and are renaming her SILVER BONITO. Completed at Faversham in 1973 at a cost of £269 000, she has not been a success so far; her initial programme of restaurant cruises from Chelsea lasted under two years and has been followed by long spells of inactivity interspersed with charter work. With her purchase, Woods now own the two largest pleasure craft on the Thames.

Capital Cruises, London The GOLDEN ROSE has been renamed SPIRIT OF LONDON and is now in service, mainly on evening party trips.

SOUTH COAST

British Rail The Ryde service was reduced on 1 October and certain peak-hour services withdrawn; the passenger ships now make 16 round trips daily (instead of 20) while a further call is made at Ryde at midnight by a Fishbourne car ferry. BR plans to withdraw the SHANKLIN at the end of the year, apparently because of her poor mechanical condition. A two-ship service, with no cruises, is proposed for next summer. Western Ferries' HIGHLAND SEABIRD is expected to be chartered for trials on the service early next year. Tenders are being sought for two 138-car ferries for the Fishbourne service; they would enter service in 1981 when a new Portsmouth terminal is opened at Gunwharf Road to replace the present one at Broad Street.

Portsmouth Harbour Ferry Co The GAY ENTERPRISE is being renamed SOLENT ENTERPRISE. She was built in 1971 before the present use of the word "gay" became widespread, but the name is presumably now thought to be unsuitable.
Croson The BOURNEMOUTH BELLE finished her season on 27 September, followed by the POOLE BELLE on 11 October and the DORSET BELLE on the 31st.

CHANNEL ISLANDS
British Rail is believed to be considering a second-hand replacement for the CALEDONIAN PRINCESS; the cost of a new ship - £15 to 20 million - is thought to be too great.
Jetcat Ltd, Jersey This new company has ordered a 95-ft aluminium catamaran from Marinteknik of Öregrund, Sweden, for delivery next summer. The craft will have a speed of 33 knots and will presumably operate to France.

WEST OF ENGLAND
Isles of Scilly Steamship Co The SCILLONIAN III is due to begin her refit at Newport on 6 November and for about two weeks, the service will be suspended. In the year up to 31 March, the Co's turnover was £831 195 (21% greater than the previous year's) and trading profit was £193 517 (up 61%); net profit, after tax etc, was £20 401. The ship sustained some damage at the harbours in the very bad winter of 1978/79 and Falmouth was seriously considered as the winter mainland port; the Company has however decided to stay at Penzance.

BRISTOL CHANNEL
P & A Campbell The BALMORAL's 23-hour excursion from Bristol on 13 October attracted some 350 passengers, but the weather prevented a landing at Lundy. The BALMORAL ended her season on 21 October and is now laid up at Bristol.

WEST WALES
Pembroke Leisure The new vessel TUDOR PRINCESS was ordered from the now-defunct Impala Marine of Twickenham, but was not delivered in time for the summer season. The TUDOR PRINCE thus continued to operate alone. Work at the Twickenham yard has been taken over by Strong Marine Construction Ltd and the TUDOR PRINCESS was nearing completion in October.

MIDLAND WATERWAYS
P Newman, Langley Mill (Derbyshire), has used the 48-passenger EREWASH ROSE (previously HEADLAND PRINCESS of Christchurch) for short trips on the Erewash Canal for the past two seasons. The boat has now been offered for sale for £4500.

IRISH SEA
Isle of Man Steam Packet Co The MONA'S QUEEN left dry dock on 22 October to resume service in place of the MANX MAID which is now laid up in Morpeth Dock, Birkenhead.

 © G P Hamer 1 November 1979

TRIP OUT

December 1979

As 1979 draws to a close, a quick glance back over the 1970s would seem appropriate. The excursion trade seems to have survived the decade well, though it must be remembered that the twenty years from the early 1950s onwards were a period of great contraction and that in 1970 little was left of the traditional coastal day excursion trade. Since 1970, there has been little further contraction and many aspects of the trade have done remarkably well. Opportunities to make trips on inland waterways have grown considerably, not only on rivers like the Thames where there have always been such services, but on the canals where many thriving new businesses have been established. Around the coasts, the 1970s saw a resumption of the building of new excursion vessels after a period of fifteen years or more when new construction seemed unthinkable. New steel-hulled vessels have entered service on the Solent, at Bournemouth, at Padstow and other places. Whilst these are much smaller than the pleasure steamers withdrawn in the 1950s and '60s, they are much larger than any new vessels built in that period.

Geoffrey Hamer

EAST ANGLIA

Essex Marina Ltd took over the marina at Wallasea Island this year together with the ferry across the River Crouch from Burnham. The previous operator, Eastwood Marine (Essex) Ltd„ went into liquidation in March after its owners, the merchant bankers Fraser Ansbacher, sold the marina. The 'Caribbean'-class waterbus MAPLIN, used for river cruises and the ferry, has now been offered for sale for £12 000.

THAMES

Westminster and Tower boats are running similar winter schedules to previous years'. The only change is that Thames Pleasure Craft is now longer involved in the service from Westminster (they are still in the Tower-based service) and their place has been taken by Maynard's COCKNEY SPARROW and Moore's NEW MARY LOUISE.

Amongst boats advertising cruises for New Year's Eve are the SPIRIT OF LONDON (fare £25.95 including dinner) and, on the Regent's Canal, the FAIR LADY (£20).

Greenwich Pleasure Craft is running a three-boat service from Charing Cross to Greenwich via the Tower this winter. Cruises to the Flood Barrier at Woolwich have ceased.

J P T Coakley, Tower Pier The NEW ROSELAND was sold last summer and went to Maldon. She is now being offered for sale again there for £7950 but seems unlikely to return to passenger service. Originally at Bridlington, she spent most of her life at Falmouth before coming to London in 1971.

WEST OF ENGLAND

M D Barrow, Exmouth/Torquay The DEVON PRINCESS is to be replaced by the new vessel next season and has been advertised for sale for £35 000. Mr Barrow also owns the PRIDE OF THE BAY and TENBY QUEEN though it is not known if the latter was commissioned last season.

Isles of Scilly Steamship Co The SCILLONIAN III went to Swansea for her refit, arriving there on 6 November and staying for about a week. One figure in the last issue was incorrect: the Co's turnover had increased by 30%, not 21%.

MIDLAND WATERWAYS

Severn Leisure, Upton The CONWAY CASTLE has been offered for sale for £45 000.

NORTH WEST

Bithells Boats, Chester The business is now owned by the local construction group Pochin's Ltd. Last month they announced plans to spend £3 million on building a hotel on land at the Groves, the riverside promenade used by the boating business.

Nu-Way Cruisers, Carnforth The former Windermere launch IROQUOIS no longer *has* a passenger certificate as the owners are unwilling to pay the DoT survey fee. She still runs on the Lancaster Canal and can be hired by parties of up to 12 people.

IRISH SEA

The number of arrivals by sea in the Isle of Man from May to September was 493 081, 22% more than in 1978 and the best figure since 1911. The Manx Government plans to spend £7.2 million on a new breakwater at Douglas to protect the piers from south-easterly gales; this will make a reliable roll-on/off service possible.

Isle of Man Steam Packet Co The BEN-MY-CHREE was dry-docked from 30 October for about 10 days. The MANX MAID is next in line for refit. The company has announced its 1980 fares which apply from 1 May; the ordinary single fare from any port rises from £9.30 to £11.

Manx Line The service was interrupted yet again between 7 Nov. and 2 December while the MANX VIKING underwent engine repairs at Barrow. A service for freight was maintained by chartering the DALRIADA from BR.

MISCELLANY

The former paddle steamer WINGFIELD CASTLE is now moored at Butler's Wharf on the South Bank downstream from Tower Bridge. Her owners seem to have no plans for her and their interest is clearly speculative.

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