



Flagship of the Year 2018

Date: 15th March 2018

Name of the Vessel: St Joan

Registration number: 742

Which region are you representing:

Thames estuary ✓ Bristol Channel

East Anglia Mersey

Scotland Solent

South West

Significance of vessel:

St Joan is a 52ft Express Coastal Cruiser built in 1929 for Nigel Guinness by J W Brooke & Co of Lowestoft. A number of newspaper and magazine articles were published around the time of her completion. She was requisitioned in June 1940 and allocated to RAF Valley, Anglesey, on Air-Sea Rescue duties finally returning to private ownership in 1948.

Extensive interior work was undertaken between 1990 and 1995 which restored her layout and finishes (with minor improvements for functionality) to the original build specification. She was re-engined with two 115hp Cummins diesels. A book about her restoration has also been published.

The original compass, clock, searchlight and custom made saloon wall light fittings are still in service today.

St Joan was purchased in April 2003 by Heritage Boat Charters Ltd and used commercially until 2017 to provide chartered day trips on the River Thames, both tidal and non-tidal to suit the client's requirements and provided a classic 1930's experience for the guests. She was licenced by the Port of London Authority as a Small Commercial Passenger Vessel to carry up to 12 passengers.

She took part in the Thames Nelson Flotilla in 2005 and Queen Elizabeth's Thames Diamond Jubilee Pageant in 2012.

Key places to be visited:

To celebrate the 100th anniversary of the formation of the RAF, the 70th anniversary of St Joan returning to private ownership and the 15th anniversary of her last purchase, we have decided to circumnavigate the UK this summer and whilst doing so raise funds for the RAF100 and RNLI Charities, to symbolically re-unite the Air and Sea Rescue Services. "Justgiving pages" have been set-up for each charity to enable donations to be made directly to them (the links will be included on the blog site which is being created).

We will visit the RNLI Stations that are near-by or at our 'ports of call' during the passage. In particular we will stop at RNLI HQ Poole. Also at Holyhead on Anglesey to invite the officers of RAF Valley onboard to commemorate St Joan's WWII service there.

The Passage Plan currently starts on Friday 11 May from Teddington on the River Thames returning on Monday 10th September, covering an estimated distance of 2150 NM.

Main 'ports of call' are planned as:-

Ramsgate, Cowes, Poole, Weymouth, Lyme Regis, Plymouth, Fowey, Newlyn/Penzance, Padstow, Milford Sound, Aberystwyth, Holyhead, Douglas (IoM), Portpatrick, Cambletown, Port Ellen, Oban, Tobermory, Mallaig, Plockton, Portree, Canna, Oban, Caledonian Canal, Inverness, Peterhead, Port Edgar, Amble, Whitby, Bridlington, Hull, Wells, Lowestoft, Harwich (Shotley), London (St Katherine Docks), Teddington.

Way in which the vessel would support NHS-UK during the year:

St Joan always attracts attention due to her age and classical elegant lines. So we will be talking to many people around the country between May and September about the boat, her membership of the National Registry of Historic Vessels and the important work undertaken by the NHS-UK. We will happily distribute any PR material and display any posters you may have when we are in port, as well as welcoming members of the 'team' onboard.

At the St Katherine Docks Classic Boat Festival in September 2017, we showed over 100 people around the boat. We would expect that number to increase five-fold during our trip around the UK, which will present a great opportunity to spread the word about the work of the NHS-UK.

Details of events or festivals to be attended and public benefit:

At each 'port of call' we will welcome members of the public to come onboard and share the vessel's history and our experiences.

We will be inviting RAF Veteran Associations to visit us, to see one of the old requisitioned WWII Air-Sea Rescue vessels in all her current glory.

We are still investigating the logistics of attending official events that coincide with our intended Passage Plans and will make every effort to attend where we can.

Events that we have identified which currently tie up are:-

2/6 – Lyme Regis RNLI Flag Day

19/7 – Isle of Mull Highland Games – Tobermory

11 to 14/8 – Edinburgh Festivals

3 to 9/9 – St Katherine Docks – Classic Boat Festival

Should St Joan be chosen as the NHS-UK Flag Ship, the grant will be used as part payment of the currently planned restoration work required to replace the wheelhouse roof. That work is scheduled to be undertaken in April, as part of the preparations for the cruise.