



THE QUEEN'S ROWBARGE

**Review of the
2016 & 2017
Seasons**



GLORIANA

THE QUEEN'S ROWBARGE

This report covers the season of 2016 and events held so far in 2017.

'Gloriana' has continued to be welcomed at numerous riparian events both regular annual events and those newly initiated by supporters, always creating memories for both those on board and those who spectate her regal progress up and down the River Thames.

~ 2016 ~

Once again after the winter months under canvas in the Port of London Authority yard at Denton the barge was relaunched in early April and handed over to the Operations Team.

This year was to be memorable for HM Queen who would celebrate her 90th birthday, we were sure 'Gloriana' would play a part in the planned celebrations.

The first event was the annual Tudor Pull from Hampton Court to HM Tower of London by HM Barge Master with a crew of Watermen from the Watermen & Lightermen Company and escort boats from The Thames Traditional Rowing Association.



After the ceremony outside the main gates of Hampton Court Palace the 'Stela' was brought on board by HM Barge Master Paul Ludwig and safely placed in the saloon for the journey.

We were joined on board by Dame Penelope Keith who was making a programme about HM Queen to celebrate her 90th year. The programme was aired on Channel 4 in June and called 'Penelope Keith At Her Majesty's Service'.
www.channel4.com/programmes/penelope-keith-at-her-majestys-service

Dame Penelope chats to
HM Barge Master Paul
Ludwig as 'Gloriana'
leaves the Palace



The flotilla of over twenty boats arrived at Tower Bridge and the Watermen, led by HM Barge Master, paraded to HM Tower of London and once again presented the 'Stela' to the Duty Governor fulfilling his duty as charged at Hampton Court.

The London on Water Festival in St Katherine Docks between 4th and 7th May featured 'Gloriana' in all her splendour on show to the attending guests and public viewing from the dock side.

As we say to all those who board the Royal barge "Smile, you're on camera and will be on social media within the next few minutes!" and as usual all the tourists were clicking away with their devices.

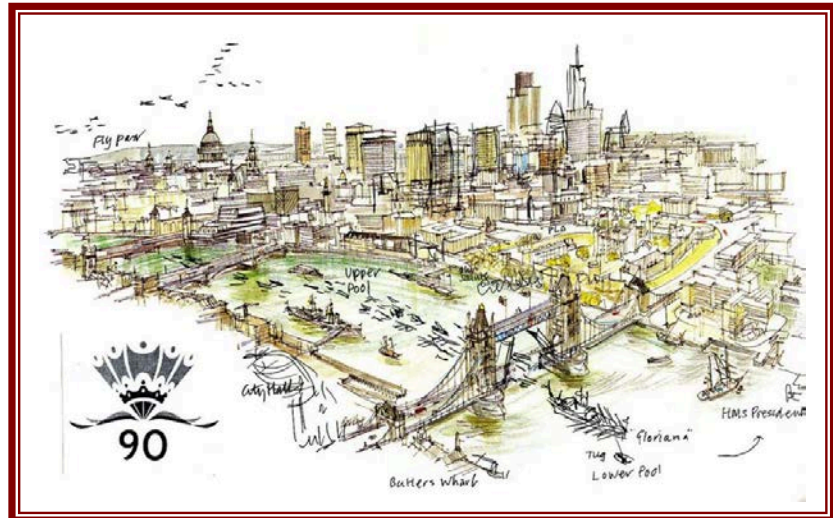
Plans being made by Thames Alive were well underway for a celebratory flotilla of craft on the Thames and on the 11th June 'Gloriana' was boarded at RNR HMS 'President' by invited guests hosted by our Chairman Lord Sterling in the uniform of Vice Admiral of the Royal Naval Reserve.



'Gloriana' led a flotilla of sixteen Dunkirk Little Ships upstream to the Palace of Westminster where they were joined by another flotilla of manpowered boats.

The flotilla then returned downstream to a full salute from Tower Bridge as the RAF Red Arrows display team flew over central London to the sound of 'Rule Britannia' being sung on board MV 'Havengore' – a truly wonderful salute to mark HM Queen's 90th birthday.

Peter Kent's picture captured the final salute of another memorable day on the River Thames in London



'Gloriana' now moved upstream to attend Kingston Town Regatta. This was with the support of the Royal Borough of Kingston upon Thames with whom the Trust are now in discussion about the building of a Royal boathouse.



A volunteer scratch crew rowing up past the regatta enclosure

The next week saw the Royal barge in Henley on Thames moored at Phyllis Court Club for a fund-raising dinner on behalf of The Gloriana Trust.

The hundred guests were given a guided tour of 'Gloriana' followed by dinner and a presentation about the building and operation of the Royal barge.

After a very successful evening 'Gloriana' moved down river a few hundred yards to moor at the Thames Traditional Boat Festival in preparation for the three-day event.

The Festival had gone through some troubled times recently but with the centre piece of 'Gloriana' a revival was now underway.

Hundreds of traditional boats (no 'plastic' or modern steel permitted) gathered on Fawley Meadow for a truly English weekend of row pasts, sail pasts and many on shore activities.

For the first row past the barge was crewed by boys and staff from Shiplake College who had great fun even though the weather was rather wet. Later we welcomed Prince Michael of Kent on board and a crew from Wargrave Boating Club rowed the course.



Prince Michael of Kent and the Wargrave Boating Club crew in salute



The local Ukulele band serenade the crowds from the rowing deck of 'Gloriana'.

After a very successful weekend in Henley 'Gloriana' travelled back downstream to Kingston where the Port of London Authority, great supporters of the Trust, took her for a row as a "Thank you" from all of us who operate the barge.



After a short spell in Shepperton Marina 'Gloriana' returned downstream to St. Katherine Docks in preparation for the Classic Boat Festival where she was once again centre stage.



'Gloriana' was moored on the central pontoon and open to invited guests and close enough for all the visitors to enjoy the finery of her decorations.

Unfortunately, due to an issue with the propulsion system a planned week end of rowing in Putney had to be cancelled.

The next event had been an idea discussed by Sir Steve Redgrave and Lord Sterling and after five years we held the first 'Gloriana Achievers Day'.

Eighty youngsters from two Harris Federation Academies in East London arrived at Royal Docks Adventure on a grey morning to see 'Gloriana' moored alongside.

They were heard to say "Bet we won't be allowed anywhere near that" to find themselves being welcomed on board by Lord Sterling and crew.



After an introduction video from Sir Steve and rousing chat from Lord Sterling the youngsters were taken out by the coaches from Skerries 4 Schools who taught them the basics of rowing in VIII oared 'traditional' boats ~ skerries.

This was followed by the Gloriana Achievers Day Regatta ~ two five lane races and a time trial to find the fastest overall academy and the fastest crews, all organised with the assistance of London Youth Rowing with our trustee Eric Reynolds umpiring the races – all very traditional.

The day on the water was rounded off with the fastest crews from each academy rowing 'Gloriana' escorted by the other eight skerries



The two winning crews rowing 'Gloriana' in the celebration flotilla escorted by their fellow students

Finally, all the students were presented with a participant's certificate and the winning academy was presented with the magnificent 'Gloriana Achievers Day' trophy.



The eighty youngsters who had a great day 'messing about in boats!'

The post event feedback from the youngsters was extremely heart-warming with comments such as "Amazing!", "Life changing", "Awesome" and we understand at least five of the youngsters have found their way to a rowing club and are continuing their enjoyment of the sport.

This was to be the finale to the season of 2016 ~ a great year on the Thames with the prospect of many more wonderful events next year.

~ 2017 ~

Following a number of issues with the original propulsion package the '16-'17 winter maintenance programme became a major refit of the propulsion system.

The team, led once again by Damian Byrne and Simon Davies, worked tirelessly to complete the task of fitting two Torqeedo Deep Blue 40 systems in time for MCA trials and certification for an early first event on Boat Race day.

The extensive work was completed, she was relaunched and 'Gloriana' passed the sea trials with flying colours and after a short stay in St. Katherine Docks made her way upstream to Putney for the first 'Boat Race Festival of Rowing'.

On a lovely spring day 'Gloriana' led a flotilla of twenty traditional rowing boats up the Boat Race course watched by thousands waiting for the main event.

The crew tossed oars at every opportunity, cheering the crowds who replied with gusto ~ an amazing experience for everyone involved.



The flotilla moves off upstream to set what is probably the slowest time over The Boat Race course ~ 1 hour 7 minutes!!



The flotilla was followed up the course by two divisions of Watermen's cutters racing in the Oxbridge Challenge and these were chased by the two 1829 Oxbridge gigs, replicas of the original boats used in the first Boat Race.

A great day on the river watched by thousands on the banks of the Thames.

The annual Tudor Pull followed in late May. Once again it was a splendid day with hundreds of spectators cheering Henry VIII as he escorted the 'Stela' down to the river and on board 'Gloriana'.



The crew of Royal Waterman rowed down into London followed by the usual flotilla of twenty plus Livery cutters and skerries from local rowing clubs – a wonderful annual pageant.



Early June saw the London on Water Show in St. Katherine Docks once again. 'Gloriana' wasn't directly involved but with her new mooring location next to a popular coffee shop she was on show to the visitors and welcomed invited guests on board.

A year of planning the next events proved to be worth every minute.

The Spelthorne River Day started in Sunbury on Thames with a very enthusiastic crew from the newly formed Sunbury Skiff & Punting Club crewing 'Gloriana' as she proceeded upstream to 'beat the boundary' of the Borough of Spelthorne with the Mayor Cllr. Vivienne Leighton and guests greatly enjoying the experience.



'Gloriana' passing under the new Walton on Thames road bridge with an escort from Weybridge Wayfarer crews.

SS&PC rowed from Sunbury up to Chertsey lock.

Boats from all the different clubs along the river were invited and came to join at various stages whilst at every lock hundreds of people came to see the Royal barge and her escorts.



A second crew from Burway RC and Sir William Perkins School rowed 'Gloriana' from Chertsey to Staines

The crowds came out to each lock and lined the banks to cheer us on upstream



This wonderful day on the river ended with 'Gloriana' mooring in Staines upon Thames for a reception at the Thames Lodge Hotel.

After a night at local private moorings the barge was back in Staines for the Staines River Day ~ on display at the central moorings and being taken out for two row pasts by local rowing clubs.



Rowing downstream in to Staines upon Thames (the ensign had been dipped to pass under the road bridge!)

A mixed crew from Staines RC enjoying the experience and...



...one rower even gave up attending her niece's wedding to row on 'Gloriana'!!

The barge was viewed by hundreds of people attending a wonderful riverside event ~ another great day on the river.

'Gloriana' now continued upstream arriving in Henley on Thames for the Royal Regatta, once again mooring at the Boat Tents for the five-day International festival of rowing.



'Gloriana' fully dressed attracted the crowds throughout the five days becoming the meeting place of choice.

The crew from Pangbourne College rowing down past Phyllis Court Club before their row past up the HRR course ~ a memorable day for all those on board.



Over the past five years 'Gloriana' had not been upstream of Henley due to the unknown factor of how much finery would have to be dismantled to pass under Sonning Bridge, this was answered on the Monday after HRR.

After a night at private moorings in Wargrave 'Gloriana' made a clear passage up through Sonning bridge before returning downstream.



This now opens the river up to us as far as the next low bridge at Culham lock cut ~ the river beckons!

On her way down steam to the next event 'Gloriana' paid a visit to 'The Waterside Inn' at Bray which was greatly enjoyed by the guests dining there on a lovely sunny summers day.

Kingston Town Regatta was the next event with 'Gloriana' once again moored on the town mooring outside 'The Gazebo' where she was on view to the passing public.

During the two-day regatta invited crews rowed over the course and were joined on board by the winner of the 2016 Gloriana Photography competition, Jim Moore. The numerous spectators and competitors at the regatta greatly appreciated the colourful addition to the racing programme.



The judicial rowing group 'The Bench Blisters' crewed 'Gloriana' once again with great style.

On day two the local Sea Cadets from 'TS Steadfast' rowed up through Kingston, a memorable experience for the young mixed crew who had a wonderful row.



The barge now turned around and went back upstream, over three days, to Henley on Thames and moored once again at Phyllis Court Club.

The next event was another fund raiser ~ A 'Gloriana' Cream Tea. The seventy guests were invited on board in small groups and enjoyed the now familiar talk about the build and operation of the Royal barge followed by tea served in the pavilion.

A crew from the Phyllis Court Rowing Club then rowed the Club President and guests downstream to the pontoon at the Traditional Boat Festival site.



The Phyllis Court RC crew enjoying the row on the Henley reach to the Traditional Boat Festival site.

The Rug Company, who generously donated the Royal rug on the commissioning of 'Gloriana', were to be the main sponsors of this years Thames Traditional Boat Festival. An early evening reception was held on board the barge with a small group of invited guests being treated to an early evening row down the Henley mile.

A local harpist played to the Rug Company reception before the sundowner row departed.



Over the following three days 'Gloriana' was the centre piece to the wonderful gathering of traditional boats of all shapes and sizes. Five crews (four local and one from Worcester) were invited to row and took prize winners and guests on memorable rows down the Henley Royal Regatta course.



Henley Rowing Club mixed crew rowing down to Temple Island with the steam launch 'Consuta' delivering a bride for her wedding ceremony on the island – we tossed oars in salute as we rowed past!

The TV celebrity and Ocean rower Ben Fogle joined Reading RC as they rowed the Henley mile.

He's asked to come for a paddle sometime soon...I'm sure we can arrange that!



'Gloriana' leaving Henley under her own power after another successful series of events - she'll be back!

'Gloriana' now made her way, over four days, downstream to her summer moorings of St. Katherine Docks.

More details and many more pictures of these events can be found on our Face Book pages via our web site www.glorianaqrb.org.uk .

What's to come during the rest of 2017...

The outstanding (from 2016) charity row for The Queen Elizabeth Scholarship Trust (the chosen charity of the Royal Warrant Holders Association);

A British Asian Trust charity row;

The Putney Rowing Weekend when ten local clubs will put crews on board and take 'Gloriana' for a row on the reach, this coincides with the Tideway Tunnel Riverside Day;

The Classic Boat Festival in St. Katherine Docks when once again the Royal barge will be centre stage to the boats on display;

The second 'Gloriana Achievers Day' at Royal Docks Adventure where once again eighty youngsters will be introduced to the wonderful sport of rowing;

And finally, The Lord Mayor's Flotilla when 'Gloriana' will carry the new Lord Mayor to the City of London on the morning of the Lord Mayor's Show.

Malcolm KNIGHT
Events Manager
The Queen's Row Barge 'Gloriana'

August 2017